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". . . . HE CONSIDERED HER FOR A MOMENT IN THE ABSTRACT . . . ."

To Windward

The Story of a Stormy Course

By

Henry C. Rowland

Author of "Sea Scamps"

Frontispiece in Colors by
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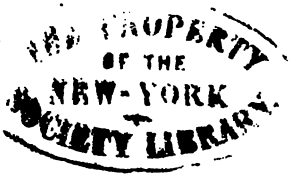

TO
MY MOTHER

painted boat whose glistening white served to emphasize his odd apparel. This consisted of a black mortar-board cap with a vivid green tassel and a flowing gown of somber black that enveloped his tall, powerful figure from the massive shoulders to the ground. As he raised his hand to give the added force of gesture to the last quick command, the light cashmere sleeve of the gown slid back, showing a bare arm, brown, weather-roughened, and thewed and sinewed like that of a smith.

"Now, then, you with the for'ard guy, lead your line through the snatch-block at the foot of the foremast, and take it to where the starboard man can handle it. Now, take that capstan-brake"—he indicated the implement in question with a circular roll of parchment that was crushed in the sinewy grip of his big left hand—"and jump down below and see that she lands all right."

In the slight delay, he took off his rigid headgear and fanned his face vigorously, for the day was suffocatingly hot, and small rills of moisture were finding their natural conduits in the deep furrows of his face. Glancing at the parchment, and finding it somewhat grimy from his grasp, he tossed it aside with contemptuous care.

A muffled hail from the hold told him that all was in readiness, and in a few more quick, staccato orders, the heavy spar settled into its place and the task was completed.

"Now, then, boys, set up your standing rigging," ordered the master-artisan, and, picking up his parchment, he strode toward the door of the shop, muttering imprecations upon the flowing garment, whose

TO WINDWARD

CHAPTER I

LAND-LOCKED

'VAST heavin' !—catch a turn on the bitts, you with the after guy! Think you're stronger than the laws of gravitation? Now lower, you at the shears, handsomely, hand—some—ly, *handsomely*, I say! D'ye want to drop that stick through the schooner's bottom? Set taut on that starboard guy, and get your masthead over—— Well, how in the nation is he going to get it over unless you give him some slack, you Indian on the ways?"

The picture was not a common one. A gang of riggers were hard at work stepping the mainmast of a fifty-ton cargo-schooner lying alongside a rotting wharf. Directing the operation was a young man, whose high and hard-lined features and deep, penetrating voice amply bespoke his New England origin. Deep in the interest of his task the oddity of his appearance was lost upon him, nor indeed did any of those whom he directed in strong and strident terms see fit to pause and comment on it.

He was standing on the narrow strip of beach beside the jetty, and at the head of a set of newly slushed ways from which the vessel had just been slid. His background was the gleaming bilge of a freshly

quick flush spread over his high cheek-bones and the cold gray eyes were marvelously softened.

"Thank you, Captain Perkins—you *are* the first."

With the true Anglo-Saxon reaction both men made immediate pretext of sudden responsibility. Amos walked to the rear of the dingy shop and ascended a flight of dilapidated stairs that complained bitterly beneath his weight. Arrived in the loft above, which was spacious and fairly well lighted by a row of small windows on either side, he strode rapidly, and with the step of one accustomed to the place, down between the long benches which were fitted with the heavy sewing-machines used in the manufacture of sails and covered with odds and ends of material and implements essential to the craft: bolts of duck and canvas of varying grades, balls of cotton twine, "palms" and needles, lumps of wax and marline spikes, pieces of blue chalk, manilla for bolt ropes, and other articles in indescribable confusion.

At the end of the loft Amos entered a fair-sized room separated from the other space by a six-foot partition of light scantling. Within, the most conspicuous piece of furniture was a large table, smooth-planed and seamless, on which were secured by thumb tacks, outlined diagrams and sectional drawings of boats. In the corner of the room was built a rough but comfortable-appearing bunk, the space beneath being occupied by lockers. A home-made washstand and a fragmentary mirror completed the furniture of the room, which represented the permanent domicile of Amos Knapp, Master Mariner, B. A., M. D., and all solely through the power of his own resourcefulness.

Once in his stronghold, Amos's actions were not

such as might have been expected of one who had but half an hour previously been graduated *summa cum laude*. The precious piece of parchment which represented so many weary months of physical and mental toil was sent flying from him with a force that ripped it free of its ribbon of ornate green; the tasseled mortar-board was sent skimming into one corner, and the fluttering gown was torn from the massive shoulders, rolled into a misshapen wad, and flung furiously into another. Thus revealed in trousers and sleeveless shirt, Amos sank upon the edge of his cot and shook his fist at the disheveled sheepskin on the floor in front of him.

"There, confound ye! there you are at last; and a sweet-scented time of it I've had getting my grip on ye! Now, by George, you've got to pay me back, cent for cent and cent *per* cent and the interest compounded in fame and gold and glory for every sweating hour I've spent in search of ye, or *I'll* go hang!"

He stopped abruptly to step to his washstand, snatch up the water pitcher, and pour the contents over the back of his massive neck and head, and in a calmer mood he reached for a sweet but poisonous-looking pipe and a small kaleidoscopic bag of "Morning Watch" that lay beside it. With these silent but sympathetic friends, Amos lolled back upon his bed and for the first time in many tedious months turned the leaves of his life in retrospect.

Backward page by page he went, past the weary hours in which he had hammered his medical education with a calking iron and a mallet out of the reeking sides of ships; back through college, school, and childhood years until he had reached the limits of recollec-

tion; then onward again. Onward past the present state until his cold gray eyes were misty with the dim sight of the future.

With the natural satisfaction at having reached another landing on his upward climb to a career, came the perplexing question as to the next move. Of money he had but little; of backing, none, thanks to his own somewhat aggressive spirit of independence. Brains he undoubtedly possessed, and another asset on which up to this time he had never allowed to enter his calculations. This was the usual luck granted by the law of compensation, the dividend of which is always paid when least expected.

Unlike most men in his position he held that there were certain kinds of work to which a native-born American should never turn his hand. He might dig a ditch, but not wait upon others of his caste. He could wash a wagon, but dishes from his classmates' table were another matter. As a professional athlete he might black a man's eye, but his boots—never. This code of ethics cost him much employment that he might otherwise have had, but saved him his self-respect and that of his classmates, sparing him at the same time much undesired sympathy.

Through the summer months it had been easy for him to get employment in any shipyard, as he had lived alongshore from boyhood and had even served a sort of apprenticeship in a yard that had turned out many a crack coaster. In the winter it was more difficult, as so much of his time was required for his work.

Like many of his race, one of Amos's strongest talents was construction. This faculty had nothing

narrow about it. He was willing to attempt the modeling of anything, from a lady's watch to a full-rigged ship, and it was probably his strong sense of the relations of component parts that first awakened his interest in the study of that finest and most intricate of machines—the human body.

In outward appearance there was not a great deal about Amos to commend him to the public as a healer. He looked rather like a seafarer of sorts, but this was not unnatural.

Finally he arose and went below.

As he entered the little office of the shipyard, Captain Perkins handed him an envelope which bore the postmark, " Shoal Harbor, Me."

" Hughes's—that's where I worked last summer," Amos remarked as he tore open the envelope. He glanced through the letter, quickly at first; then his face grew thoughtful, and resting one big shoulder against the door he read it slowly and carefully.

" Hughes wants me to take his foreman's billet, Captain."

" 'M-h'm!—What's the pay, Amos?"

" Seventy-five a month and find myself."

" 'M-h'm,—wa-al, your diplomy ain't much good to you without a wall to hang it on, Amos. 'Nless you've got some 'un to grub stake you, I'd c'nsider it."

Amos's heavy eyebrows came together in perplexity.

" He wants me right off—wants me to telegraph if I'm coming."

" Then you'd best telegraph that you're going and do your c'nsiderin' afterwards. A man can c'nsider a heap better when he's sittin' a-top of a job."

Amos nodded. " I did think of trying for some of

these paid hospital appointments," he answered a trifle wistfully. "I've been working like a stoker all of my life to get this sheepskin, and now that I've got it, I've got to keep on working to get a chance to use it. Oh, well, it's better than pill drumming or prancing around with a folio of sample pages under my arm looking one way for a dollar and the other for the dog. I'm off to-night on the eleven-thirty." For a moment his large frame darkened the doorway; then the light streamed in again, throwing lines and shadows across the rugged, kindly old face of the ancient seafarer as he gazed after the strongly moving figure in the distance.

Amos left for Shoal Harbor that night, and on arriving the following morning went at once to Hughes's shipyard, where his position was duly confirmed.

Having settled affairs with his employer he next turned his steps toward a certain little vine-covered cottage on the edge of the village about half a mile from the yard. This was the abode of the Rev. Peter Stanley, at whose house Amos had been quartered when previously employed in the place.

As he came within sight of the house a girl accompanied by a large Newfoundland dog, which latter Amos promptly recognized as an old friend and member of the clergyman's household, turned out of the gate and came in his direction.

Suddenly the dog stopped, pricked up his ears, and came bounding toward him with joyous yelps of recognition, leaping about him shoulder-high and squealing frantically in an exuberance of delight that was utterly regardless of the decency of Amos's best suit of broadcloth, while the girl, shocked at this breach of dignity,

sought vainly to call him back. Amos, at the same time fending and caressing with one arm, looked up at her in surprise and some embarrassment.

"Come here, Sailor!" she called indignantly; "here, sir! Sailor, come *here!*" The entreaty of her sweet voice was utterly lost on Sailor, or if anything served only to whet his ardor. The path was slightly muddy from a rain the night before, and Amos's suit of sober black was by this time streaked and pawed in a manner sad to see. Moreover, his hat had gone by the board, and Sailor, seizing it in a transport of puppy glee, indecent in one of his age, was gamboling lightheartedly in an effort to invite one of the frolics which he remembered of old. Then Amos, in a sudden plunge to recapture it, unshipped his collar, and at this catastrophe threw dignity to the winds, and, tackling the dog in football fashion, got him around the hind quarters, and dog and man rolled over and over in the damp grass. The hat was finally regained in a somewhat dilapidated condition, the dog tossed playfully over on his back, and Amos, looking as if he had been caught up in a street-sweeping machine, arose to his feet and confronted the indignant and astonished lady, who stood eying him with strong disfavor.

"I really beg your pardon, sir, for the behavior of my dog," she began in rather the tone of one demanding than making an apology. "It is most extraordinary. I never knew him to act like that before."

"Oh, don't mention it," replied Amos, fighting with his collar; "we all give way to folly at times."

"So it appears," she replied. "I am afraid he has muddied your clothes."

"He hasn't the regard for decency that one might

expect of the member of a clergyman's family," admitted Amos, looking first at his tarnished raiment and then at the dog, that was standing by laughing at the havoc which he had created.

"He acts as if he knew you," she remarked loftily and in the tone of one deprecating the mixed acquaintance of a friend.

"He does," said Amos apologetically, knocking the dints out of his battered headgear. Then he glanced at the girl, who was indeed worth looking at.

She was tall and straight and divinely made, with a free, full figure surprising in one of her years, which he guessed at not more than eighteen. Just then her pretty face was flushed with anger and her big blue eyes sparkled with resentment. She wore a pink sunbonnet, which was thrown back across her shoulders and seemed too stiff and prim to inclose her great mass of golden-copper hair. Her coloring was rich and ruddy, with a vivid red of cheek and lip, which a hundred years before would have brought frowns to the grim-faced elders of that prim New England town.

As Amos looked at her he was filled with a sudden rush of inspiration.

"Why, you must be Hope!" he exclaimed in the tone of an explorer who has suddenly found a new island.

Her eyes sparkled and the color of her cheeks deepened.

"I am Miss Stanley," she replied with dignity.

"I might have known it!" exclaimed Amos, advancing on her eagerly. "I am Amos Knapp."

"Indeed?" said she.

"Why, yes," Amos went on a bit uncertainly, "I stayed with your father last summer, you know—when you were away visiting your aunt."

There was a slight pause, during which he furtively flicked away a section of the path from the knee of his trousers. But in this pause, or perhaps before, the clear eyes of the girl had looked into the soul of the man, and found it clean. Besides, she had heard much of Amos, and all of it was good, and her thoughts flashed back with a little thrill to how he had cared for the Rev. Peter during one of his attacks of rheumatism, and how this big, stalwart man had carried the little clergyman in his arms across the street to the little church and placed him in his wheel-chair near the pulpit, while he himself had read the lessons.

Nevertheless she was not quite ready to forgive him for the unconventional way in which he had made his bow. To tell the truth, Hope had builded in her girlish imagination certain maidenly pictures of the manly fellow of whom she had heard so much, and had even pictured their some time meeting and what she would say and what he would probably answer, and these things had not befallen in any way according to her dreams.

"I have heard my father speak of you," she began grudgingly, then at the quick look of real pain which flashed across the strong face, her heart smote her and her natural sympathy swept aside her pique. "In fact," she went on, with a divine smile in which Amos read full forgiveness, "after I got home he could talk of nothing else; and"—she walked up to him frankly and held out a firm hand and ravishingly rounded forearm—"I am really very glad to see you and I hope

you will forgive me for being snippy because you rolled around in the mud."

A tinge of color came for a moment on Amos's big cheek-bones, and he stepped forward and gripped the little hand, not too hard, in his big one and held it for a moment while they looked into one another's eyes. Both colored a little, then smiled, then laughed, and the friendship was clinched.

"You're a real doctor now, aren't you?" she said, as her hand dropped to her side again.

"Yes," said Amos, "but it doesn't seem to be doing me much good." And he told her why he had come to Shoal Harbor; also rather shyly confided his hope of coming to live at the clergyman's house while employed at the shipyard, artfully soliciting Hope's assistance with the little clergyman, whom he pretended to think might be unwilling to receive him because he was inclined to regard college men as unregenerate sons of Belial, through all of which clumsy and transparent guile Hope's clear eyes looked as they would through a pane of glass, and for which she liked him all the more because his artifice was of a puerile grade that bespoke small practice.

After a moment of decent hesitation she promised to intercede for him.

"I am going marketing," she said. "You go in now and see father. But first brush yourself off, as he might think that—that——"

"That I'd been thrown off the train or mixed up with the local authorities," suggested Amos, at which Hope laughed and dimpled so delightfully that he tried to think of something funny to say and promptly became very glum thereby.

With that she left him, and Amos stood watching her in a sudden access of self-disgust at the boorishness of his behavior. The dog stood halfway between, looking doubtfully from one to the other until Hope had dwindled sufficiently far into the distance to become a memory rather than an actuality. Then, somewhat to Amos's anger, he elected the company of the man. Amos had never lavished upon Sailor one-tenth part of the love and caresses that Hope had, yet the strongly primitive in the dog, recognizing the stronger primitive in the man, responded to it.

Amos, after some search, found the Rev. Peter Stanley in his orchard, where he was industriously engaged in barricading the parsonage boundary against the marauding of a neighbor's cow. The little man bore about the same resemblance to his daughter that an orange pip bears to the bursting blossom of the same fruit. He was small and spare and desiccated, albeit with much concentrated beauty of heart and soul, less apparent to the eye than as evidenced in his good works.

At sight of Amos he stared in blinking amazement, for in places like Shoal Harbor a new impression is not absorbed without some few revolutions of inner mental machinery.

"Hello, Dominie!" exclaimed Amos blithely, coming to the aid of the slow psychic impulse. "It is I, Amos Knapp."

"Why, bless my soul, Amos!—so it is,—so it is, to be sure. Well, well, well, Amos, this is indeed a pleasure, it is indeed! Why, do you know, Amos, that when I first looked up I said to myself, 'Why, that must be Amos Knapp, it must indeed'—well,

well, Amos, I am *very* glad to see you, I am indeed."

Still blinking and wiping his face with a sailor's bandanna handkerchief produced from the hip-pocket of his black clerical trousers, he advanced with a slight limp and eager outstretched hand. Amos, who had a real affection for the little minister, took it warmly. It was a commentary on the man that with all of his great strength the grasp of his hand was never painful to men of feeble mold.

"Well, well, this is indeed a surprise—a most pleasant surprise. Do you know, Amos, that the very moment I looked up something seemed to tell me that that could be none other than Amos Knapp. Those inspirations sometimes come to one. It has often seemed to me that it is a direct proof of the divine atmosphere that surrounds the most humble and unworthy of us as we pursue our daily vocations. That inner consciousness—ah! scoffers may mock at it, but there is no getting around it;—is there, now?"

"No, Dominie," said Amos, "and it was partly on that account that when I landed here in Shoal Harbor to fill a billet in Hughes's shipyard, something seemed to tell me that my old friend, the Rev. Peter Stanley, was the best friend I had to turn to, and that he would take me in and quarter me on the premises just as he did last summer when I was working here. There's nothing like knowing where to find our friends, is there, Dominie?"

The Rev. Peter was thrown into some confusion at this counter charge.

"You did rightly, Amos. I should certainly have taken it amiss if you had not come direct to me—very

much amiss. But you see, Amos, since you were here before there have been some changes in my household. My daughter Hope is here, you know, and just what she would say to the arrangement—she possesses great decision of character, Amos—great decision, which I have no doubt she inherits from me, although of course her mother was a strong-minded woman, decidedly so."

Amos thought of the portrait of the handsome but Spartan-faced woman that hung in the little parlor, and thought that he could guess the source of the greater part of Hope's decision. Seeing the little man squirming under what his kindness of heart feared might seem like lacking hospitality, Amos came speedily to the rescue.

"I have already met Miss Hope, Dominie—outside on the street; Sailor introduced us—gave me a knock-down, you might say, and she has promised to use her influence to soften your adamantine heart enough to take me in."

There was a pause of several seconds, during which this entirely new idea slowly percolated through to the understanding of the little minister. Its arrival was finally announced by a series of chuckles.

"I want to know!—that's just like you, Amos—just like you. Do you know, Amos, that very often you remind me so much of myself when I was a young fellow. We were like as two peas, Amos! You might not think it to look at me now, but when I was a young chap like you, you can rest assured that I was up and doing. Used to go to barn dances and quilting parties and corn-huskings, Amos, and I wasn't slow in finding the red ears—he! he! he! Well, that's all settled, so let's go up to the house."

CHAPTER II

LIGHT AIRS

IN spite of his delayed career the months that followed were happy ones for Amos. At times, of course, his superiority of education would revolt against the daily contact with such mediocre minds as he encountered in his work; nevertheless this work was clean, wholesome, and out of doors, even at times taxing his native ingenuity and technical knowledge of the craft to their utmost limits, for the art of shipbuilding is not a simple one, and Amos, while ranking as foreman of the yard, would often find himself in the designing room.

Amos was not only a builder of ships, but a handler of them as well. Unlike the majority of his classmates, his preparation for college had included finance as well as formulæ and Greek and Latin roots. In a choice between a high stool and the high seas Amos had elected the latter, and for three years had sailed with the fishing fleet, with the result that he had passed his academic and navigator's examinations within a short time of one another. In his first summer vacation he had made a voyage to Trepani as mate of a bark which had brought a cargo of salt to Gloucester. In the vacations following he had made two coastwise voyages, one to Pensacola for yellow pine and another to Matanzas for molasses. This practical seamanship

served him well in his present work, which, although sometimes irking him as a delay in the career of which he had dreamed, brought, notwithstanding, the usual compensations of work well done, and many an anxious merchant and storm-blown mariner might live to bless the stout frames and strong timbers that went into the vessels growing under his careful eye.

Life, too was pleasant at the Stanleys'. The little clergyman, while provincial, was a scholarly man, well read and able of discourse, and in the companionship of Hope, Amos found much that had been denied him through the conditions of his early years.

One golden day in the early autumn, as Amos was busily engaged in overseeing the shipping of a rudder on a small menhaden steamer, there came a hail from behind him.

"Oh, Amos Knapp!" Then, "Whoa, you brute—whoa!"

Amos looked over his shoulder and saw a big young man astride a small but active horse, which was at that moment expressing its distrust of a dory sail which had been limed and spread on the beach to dry.

"Hello, Dug!" called Amos in pleased surprise. "When did you break out?" Then mindful of his duties, he turned to his men. "Just let that go for the time being, boys—it's got to be dressed down a little in the heel before you can make it set up flush. Suppose you get after that new spar of the *Morning Glory;* I promised Captain Simmons to have it for him Monday." He turned to the newcomer.

"Well, well, Dug—you *have* blossomed out, haven't you? New moleskins and tan boots and spurs—Holy

Moses! Have you married money, as you always said you would?"

The rider laughed, and it needed but that to make the charm of his face irresistibly winning.

"Better than that. Got a play accepted. It's to be put on next winter."

"No!" cried Amos, with a pleased astonishment more hearty than flattering. "Bully for you, old man. I always said that you would never have to work for a living." He took the bridle in one fist while with the other he grasped the hand of his friend and fairly dragged him from the saddle.

"That's great, Dug—grand—let's see, how'll it sound? 'Mr. Clapham Good presents Miss Ruby Wings and her company in Mr. Douglas Ellsworth's latest success'—what's the title, Dug?"

"Haven't yet decided—but that wasn't what I came to tell you about, Amos. You see there's a lot of work to be done on it yet, and just now I'm looking for some quiet place to do it in. I'm stopping at the Ocean House, but it's a bit quick over there for a struggling young playwright. You wrote me about the Stanleys, you know, and I thought that perhaps they'd put me up for a few weeks." He looked around him with pleasure. "Ideal place, this. That smell of 'pine, pitch tar, turpentine, and resin' reminds me of my school geography."

Amos had grown suddenly preoccupied. Fond as he was of Ellsworth, he for some reason did not find the request altogether to his taste, even while blaming himself that it should be so. He felt that he must have a moment to think it over.

"Well, Dug," he replied, "we'll see. I've got to go

up to the shop for a minute, and in the meantime you sit here in the sun and suck up ozone and new impressions." He led the stylish little horse to a five-hundred-pound mushroom anchor that was half imbedded in the sand.

"I'll make your pony fast to this mooring, where I think he'll ride without dragging any."

Catching up a piece of line that was lying near he passed the end through the bridle ring and caught a bowline around the pony's neck with a deftness that bespoke long practice.

"See you in a minute," he remarked, and started across the yard.

Amos spoke the truth in saying that he must go to the shop, but as he walked along his mind was filled with matters alien to his craft.

There was probably no man living for whom Amos had at times possessed greater admiration and in whose traits he had less confidence than this same Douglas Ellsworth. They had roomed together during their course in the academic, and had got along remarkably well, although, or more probably because, their characters possessed such marked antitheses. Both of them were poor and both hard workers, Amos excelling in studies of a mathematical character and Ellsworth in the classics. Ellsworth came of a Boston family, rich in pedigree and culture but poor in gold.

During the summer vacation following their first college year, while Amos was at sea, Ellsworth, who possessed literary ability, had obtained some journalistic work at which he had been so successful that he returned in the autumn with ample funds to see him

through the following year. From that time on their paths had diverged, although they continued to share the same quarters. Ellsworth had cultivated an entirely different set, went out a great deal socially, and with it all did the work of three men, as in addition to the studies of the class he retained his newspaper position. Nevertheless, he and Amos kept up their friendly relations, and saw a good deal of each other.

As the year wore on, Amos began to hear some college gossip about Ellsworth's dissipations, which, however, did not lessen his esteem, as these were always of a frivolous rather than of a malicious character, and Amos had seen enough of men to appreciate that often those who went the pace in college developed a sort of moral antitoxin thereby that procured them an immunity in after life. Ellsworth spent the following summer in and about a watering place not far from where Amos was at work, and before they returned to college certain tales of a more unsavory character occasionally floated into Amos's sheltered little harbor, and caused him some solicitude. When Ellsworth returned to college, however, his appearance hardly justified the current scandals, and when Amos shook hands with him after chapel, he thought that he had seldom seen a finer, healthier-looking specimen of a man. He had developed rapidly, mentally and physically, and was at once picked out by the trainer as one of the most promising pieces of material in the university.

It is rather a mistake to assume that all young men go into an immediate physical decline as a result of debauchery. Anglo-Saxon youth possesses an hereditary craving for excitement, preferably of a healthy character as a rule, but where the opportunity of this

is lacking, the other kind is sometimes substituted. In some cases it seems almost as if the exhilaration of a fast life acts as a tonic; but like all tonics, there are certain poisonous ingredients of which an overdose would kill.

In Junior year, Ellsworth, in addition to his literary work, devoted a great deal of his time to athletics, with the usual success that seemed to crown all of his efforts. Being of a luxurious disposition, he loathed the training, and found but little pleasure in the events themselves, but the plaudits of the multitude during some great contest were ambrosia to his insatiable thirst for praise. Where other men went into athletics for the glorious sensations of physical fitness, and the real pleasure to be derived from the training and practice, Ellsworth's reward could only be obtained from a large and clamorous throng, and his name and picture in the popular publications.

The chances are that Amos, in his strong simplicity, never at all understood this trait of his friend's character. He himself had never taken up athletics, although repeatedly urged to do so. If he had not been obliged to work his way, nothing would have pleased him more, as he had a great deal of the boy under his rugged manhood, and to him a game was a game—play—fun—to be enjoyed rightly by those who could spare the time. Amos was never oppressed from a lack of exercise. He got rather more of that than he always wanted!

A due consideration of all these things, however, did not convince Amos that he was justified in refusing his friend and former room-mate his kind offices in helping him to carry out his present plan. He re-

need a little more capital before I start to smash my way into the medical profession in New York."

That night when Amos was going to bed Ellsworth came into his room.

"Look here," he remarked. "If you took that job in New London do you think you could save enough through the winter to make a start?"

Amos draped himself over the end of the bed, and looked thoughtfully at his friend before replying.

"I think so, Dug. You see I've got two years in hospital ahead of me, and everything is found there but clothes and spending money. I ought to be able to get a pretty good appointment, as I've been reading nights right along, and I'm pretty well up. Then, of course, some opening might turn up before I get out."

"Well," said Ellsworth, not without some slight embarrassment, "it's just like this. It strikes me that you're losing valuable time. Things are looking pretty well with me for the immediate future, and even as it is I've got five or six hundred that's not working, and as a classmate and room-mate and old friend, and all that sort of thing, nothing would make me happier than to have you use it."

Amos was silent for a moment; then he got up suddenly and held out his hand. "Thank you, Dug," he said, and there was a timbre in his deep voice that bespoke a deeper feeling beneath. "That is like you, and if I were really up against the wall there is no one that I would turn to sooner. As a matter of fact, old man, the places I've got my eye on are not open for attack until the spring, and by that time I hope to be well able to get along under my own sail—but I am none the less obliged and—and, you understand."

"Why, of course, Amos, but if at any time you should want anything you will shout, won't you? Good-night."

It was but natural that after such an offer as this Amos's affection for his friend should have strengthened, for, in spite of the confidence one may feel in the loyalty of those professing friendship, its material expression, where certain self-sacrifice is entailed, is something which one cannot get around, and Amos knew enough of Ellsworth's character to appreciate that, no matter how prosperous he might be, there would always be a demand which the supply could never exceed. So it was that an incident which occurred a few days later came all the harder to him.

It was a soft Indian summer night, starlit, but without a moon, and Amos being unwilling to pollute the atmosphere of the little house with the fumes of his vigorous pipe, had strolled down to the beach, where he seated himself with his back against the bilge of a hauled-out fishing boat, and gave his soul to revery. The work had been hard that day, for he was short-handed, and he had lent himself actively to a "hurry job" in dressing down a new spar, and whether through this or the soothing effect of the nicotine, or both, Amos was shortly nodding. A low voice near at hand roused him.

"But, Hope, darling, you say that you love me?"

There was a little sob, then in Hope's voice, but in tones different from any that Amos had ever heard:

"With all my heart, Douglas, dear, but—but——"

"Then kiss me, sweetheart, and forget all about it."

To Amos's horrified ears came softer sounds fol-

lowed by something semi-articulate concerning "the union of two souls" and a partly inaudible reference to marriage.

The subdued imprecation which escaped Amos's lips as he awoke to the full horror of his position did not reach the ears of the two on the other side of the same boat, and many men in Amos's position would have taken advantage of this fact to escape on hands and knees from a propinquity which might reflect so undeservedly upon the innocent eavesdropper. Supine locomotion, however, was not included in Amos's methods; in its place he raised his heavy fist, and dealt the bilge of the seine-boat such a blow that her ancient timbers quivered from stem to stern. There was a startled little shriek from the other side, and Ellsworth sprang to his feet in time to see Amos's big shoulders heave up over the opposite gunwale.

"Who's that?" cried Ellsworth, and Amos insensibly recoiled in wonder at the menace of his voice and the ferocity of his face. In all of their associations he had never seen Ellsworth roused out of his self-control.

"It is I," Amos said, then continued rapidly, "You two must excuse me. I was shored up against the bilge of this boat, taking a quiet smoke, and I fell asleep. Your voice woke me up, Douglas, and I thumped the boat to let you know that I was here."

There was a second's silence; then Ellsworth gave a short laugh.

"Thumped the boat,—I should say you did! It sounded as if it had been struck by a six-inch shell. Couldn't you delicately hint at your presence without scaring us to death?"

"I'm sorry," said Amos shortly, sore and disgusted at the whole incident. "Good-night."

He walked swiftly back to the cottage and went to his room; but all idea of sleep had left him, so, taking a manual of surgery from his shelf, he tried to read. This shortly proving a vain effort, he threw the book aside, and resting both great elbows on the table in front of him, and dropping his chin between his fists, stared moodily at the opposite wall.

Four bells were struck by his little ship's clock, then five, and still Amos's position was unchanged. It was not until he heard the front door swing to softly, and a light step on the stair, that he roused from his meditation, arose heavily, and went to bed.

The following noon as Amos was leaving the shipyard to go to his dinner, rather to his surprise he came upon Ellsworth sitting on the bottom of a capsized skiff which was hauled up on the beach. As Amos drew near he looked up and smiled.

"Can you spare a few minutes, Amos?" he asked.

"Yes," said Amos, and seated himself at his side. He guessed at what was coming, and felt grateful to Douglas for saving him the embarrassment of bringing up the subject himself, as he had firmly intended to do.

"Amos," said Ellsworth, "I have asked Hope to marry me."

Amos sprang to his feet as if the boat had been red-hot, grasped Ellsworth's hand, and wrung it in a grip which made the other wince, powerful man though he was.

"Good for you, Dug!" he cried joyfully. "I al-

ways knew that you would do the right thing when it came to the scratch."

Douglas smiled somewhat ruefully. "Thanks, Amos," he answered dryly. "I've tried—not that it took any great effort on my part, because you see, Amos, I really love her. But the trouble is—well, hang it all—she's refused me."

"What!" cried Amos in dismay.

Douglas laughed shortly. "Thanks for your subtle flattery, Amos, but it's the truth, strange as it may seem. I think she is fond enough of me," he went on modestly, "but she talks the usual nonsense about not being sure of me, and says she's afraid that it's all the result of our being thrown together constantly, and all that sort of thing. She wants me to go away for a while, and then if I still feel the same, to come back and tell her so. The worst of it is she really seems to mean it." He paused and stared glumly out across the water, while Amos meditated deeply. Finally, he turned to his friend.

"I'm not so sure but what she's right, Dug," he said slowly, albeit with some effort. "Hope is very young, and you are a very uncertain quantity, as you must know yourself."

There was a short silence; then Douglas looked him squarely in the eyes, and the expression of his face made Amos feel an affection for him such as he had never felt for any other man.

"It is that uncertainty that I am afraid of," Douglas said. "I really love Hope, as I don't think I shall love any other woman. I want you to go to her and advise her to marry me. I have not said anything about it to her father, but I will if you think that would be best."

There was a longer silence, while Amos's soul inwardly cried out against the inexperience which made it impossible for him to give the wise counsel for which he longed. It is in moments like this that lives are wrecked and saved, and Amos realized his responsibility with an inward groan. At last he rose to his feet, and shook his head.

"I can't be sure, Douglas—but it seems to me—how far has this thing gone, anyway?" he demanded desperately.

"Last night is the first time that I have really told her out and out how much I love her, but she must have seen it for a good while."

"Then it seems to me—that it would be best to do as she says. They say that women have an intuition about these things—and it would be ghastly if you were to get married in a hurry and then find that you had made a mistake. At any rate, do one of two things: either clear out in a hurry, or get married at once. That's the best advice I can give, Dug," he concluded, hopelessly mopping his big face, which had grown moist from his inward strife.

Douglas rose, too, and held out his hand.

"Thanks, Amos," he said. "That's the best and truest advice that one man ever gave another, I'll bet. When do you plan to leave?"

"This Saturday. I'm not going to wait for the yard to close, as Hughes got a letter from my future boss in New London, saying that he could use me right away."

"Then I'll go to New York next Wednesday, and until then we'll leave things *in statu quo*."

CHAPTER III

THE FOG LIFTS

AMOS spent the following winter in the New London shipyard, where, although his domestic life was less pleasant than at Shoal Harbor, he found his work on a larger scale, more interesting, and considerably more remunerative. At first he carried on a desultory correspondence with the Stanleys, which soon ceased. From Ellsworth he received in the first month six bright epistles, and thereafter none at all, from which he concluded that his love affair must have shared the usual fate of such swift summer passions.

Early in March, however, Amos received a reversal of fortune that rather centered his faculties upon his own affairs. A month before, he had invested his entire savings in the part ownership of a coasting schooner, which sailed from Bangor with a load of lumber, only to be lost in a gale a week later under circumstances which completely vitiated the insurance.

This calamity left him in a slightly worse financial condition than he had been on graduating from the medical school, but with his usual Yankee philosophy he bore up under the blow with a cheerful determination to accomplish by gradual erosion what his one vigorous blow at fortune had failed to effect.

Another blow which befell him in the latter part of

June was even more serious. This was a quarrel with the superintendent, a man of whose traits Amos had been frequently warned. This disagreement had come out of a clear sky,—as entirely unprovoked as it was unavoidable,—and when the air cleared again Amos found himself with a capital of about one hundred dollars, out of employment, and no nearer to his goal than he had been just a year before. Moreover, he was twenty-eight years of age, with at least two years of post-graduate work ahead of him before he would be fit to practice his profession.

It was then that Amos decided to return to his college town, there to consult with certain of his friends among the professors, and at the same time to enjoy such reunions with classmates as commencement week had to offer. Accordingly, he returned at once to New Haven, where the first person upon whom he called was his old friend Captain Perkins, who received him warmly, listened with the utmost sympathy to the tale of his misfortunes, and insisted upon his taking up his old quarters in the boat-house, where, upon the same day as that on which he had received his medical diploma, he found himself once more seated upon the edge of his little bunk, his thoughts given up to retrospect and plans for the future, but with one lost year upon the debit side of his account.

Those who go down to the sea in ships soon learn to take their losses with philosophy. Amos scarcely gave a thought to the past year, the interest of the immediate present demanding all of his consideration.

Finding but scanty inspiration in the four walls of his room, he soon went out and turned his steps toward the water-front, as he had always found much scope

and breadth of thought in an uninterrupted outlook. Near the Yacht Club he paused to look at some boats lying in the basin. While standing there he heard his name called, and glancing up beheld a man named White, who had graduated a year later than he, and had since taken a post-graduate course. Amos had never known him very well, but liked him from what little he had seen of him, as well as by reputation.

White was on the other side of the street, but when he saw Amos he dashed across through the mud to meet him.

"Knapp!" he cried; "you're the very man I most wanted to see. Fact is, I heard that you were in town, and was just starting out to try and stalk you. Are you going anywhere in particular?"

"No," said Amos, "I was just taking a walk."

"Then would you mind coming out aboard the schooner with me? We are in the very deuce of a fix, and I don't know of anyone who could advise us as well as you. Come out and dine with us."

Amos looked at him in surprise. He had heard that the Whites' schooner-yacht *Meridian* was in the harbor, and from where they stood he could see her long black hull and tall masts.

"Why, thanks," he replied, "I'd be very glad to go off aboard. I can't stay to dinner, though, as I've got an engagement for this evening."

This engagement was not of a very pressing character, but he thought it probable that there would be a party of guests aboard, and while not at all shy, he felt that there was still too much of the artisan about his general appearance to put him at his ease in a gay party of pleasure-seekers.

"That's too bad," said White, "but I consider myself in great luck to have found you so quickly. I'll explain the situation when we get aboard."

They walked down to the landing, where the *Meridian's* gig was lying. Not a man of the boat's crew was in sight, not even a boat-keeper. Amos looked surprised, and turned to White, who flushed angrily.

White turned to a sailor who was standing by a dinghy that had just come in from some yacht.

"Do you know where the crew of this boat from the *Meridian* have gone?" he asked.

The man grinned. "Vy vould I know——" he began, then something about Amos attracted his attention. His grin left him.

"I dhink you mide vind them ofer dere, sir," he said, pointing to a saloon across the street. White turned to Amos:

"Excuse me a minute, old chap. Be right back." He started for the gangway.

Amos was about to follow him,—then thought better of it and waited. White crossed the street, and some minutes elapsed before he came out again, followed by four sailors in blue uniform. Two of them slouched along with sheepish grins on their faces, but the other two were talking noisily, and one of them was smoking a cigar. They clattered down onto the staging and tumbled into the boat. White and Amos stepped into the stern-sheets.

"Shove off, in the bow,—up oars——" The oars went up like the antennæ of a couple of beetles. "Let fall." The oars clattered noisily into the rowlocks, and two of them splashed in the water.

"Give way, starboard,—hold water, port." The

order was clumsily executed. "Give way together." The men swung lazily, the bow oar still holding his stump of a cigar between his teeth.

"Throw away that cigar, you in the bow," called White.

The man stopped pulling long enough for number two to strike his oar, then took a farewell puff, removed the weed, and flicked it over the side. Amos felt the hair bristle on the back of his head, and the muscles of his arm tighten, but he said nothing, and started to make some commonplace remark to White. The latter looked distressed.

When they ran alongside the schooner they were rather surprised to see no one on deck, although the "absent signal" was not flying. Forward, one or two of the men were lounging about the deck, and one of them rose slowly and reluctantly, and went to the ladder to receive the boat.

"Where is Mr. White?" asked Duncan White sharply.

"'*E* must be down below, zur,—leastwise, I don't zee 'im nowhere on deck," and the man slouched forward without a salute. Again Amos felt that peculiar bristling sensation at the back of his head.

A white-coated steward appeared in the companionway.

"Please, sir, Mr. White would like to see you at once in his cabin, sir!"

"Come along, Amos," said his host. "It's nothing private now, and I think that father will be more joyful at seeing you than he will at seeing me."

Amos followed his friend down the companionway, then through the chart room, and aft to the owner's

room. Mr. White was busy writing when they entered, but he swung round in his chair at the sound of their steps. Seeing Amos's great frame blocking the narrow doorway, the anxious expression of his face gave way to one of relief. Amos saw a thoroughbred-looking man, of perhaps fifty years of age. He was of medium size, and of the comfortable habit that comes of the best of living without a surfeit thereof. His face was fretful rather than strong, and just at that moment this expression was accentuated by his unpleasant occupation, which was in going over the accounts of the schooner.

When his son introduced Amos as a college mate, he was unable to hide the involuntary expression of disappointment that crossed his face. It passed instantly, however, and he courteously invited him to be seated and take a cigar.

"I declare," he exclaimed impatiently, "if the work of auditing the accounts of this miserable yacht isn't equal to the auditing of half a dozen banks! From all I can discover, Duncan, this wretched ex-captain of ours has not only completely demoralized our crew, but swindled us most abominably into the bargain——" He turned to Amos.

"Did Duncan tell you of the pickle we're in with this seagoing house-party of ours?"

"No, I haven't said anything about it, father. Thought we'd wait until we got out here, and then hold a council of war. Amos is just the man to help us, as he knows all the shell-backs from here to Portland, and has put himself through college and the medical school by building ships—first with a maul, and afterwards with the batons. Besides this, he's

been a professional sailorman, and holds a skipper's papers."

"You don't say so!" exclaimed Mr. White, looking at Amos with new interest.

"I think that Dr. Knapp could help us to get straightened out, father," said Duncan. "Suppose you tell him how we're situated?"

"Why, it's like this, doctor," Mr. White began. "We are lying here in New Haven harbor with a party of guests and planning to go on East after commencement. I was unable to get my old skipper back this season, and in his place was unlucky enough to engage an impudent scalawag, who, after robbing me right and left, and completely demoralizing the crew, got drunk two nights ago, upon which I promptly discharged him."

"He went yesterday morning," observed Duncan, "taking the mate with him. Neither was much loss, but it came at an inopportune time."

"So here we are, unofficered except for a surly little Dutch bosun, and a crew rankly insubordinate. I have wired to several people for new officers, but they're not to be had on the spur of the moment. In the meantime the crew have gone from bad to worse. The noise they made while scrubbing down this morning was simply scandalous."

"It seems to me that it would be better not to try to live on the schooner until we get things settled," said Duncan. "It's only a question of time before we'll have to send them all ashore in a police-tug."

Amos rested his big elbow on the table and dropped his chin in his hand: a characteristic pose when thinking hard.

"I know of several first-class men you might get," he said finally, "but I'm afraid it would be hard to lay hands on them at once, and besides, I doubt if they'd shine in a berth of this sort, on a yacht. They'd bat these square-heads into shape right enough, but that isn't all that you want. I know of just the man for the mate's billet, but as for a skipper——" He turned abruptly to Mr. White.

"How would I answer?" he asked.

Mr. White glanced at him sharply, then seeing that he was entirely serious, looked astonished.

"Why, really—eh—you don't mean to say that you would seriously consider the thing. How can?—why, bless my soul, but your profession, and plans, and all that sort of thing. Do you think that you could really fill the billet? It seems to me that this position needs an older man, and something of a martinet. Besides, —eh—you see, the social part of it might be a bit awkward for you——"

"It's certainly above that of a laborer in a ship-yard, and I don't consider that I've sacrificed any caste by whacking oakum into the seams of coasters. Of course, I don't propose to mix my relations. As far as technical knowledge is concerned I don't think that you need have any fear. I've had good courses in the theory and practice of navigation, and besides, I know most of the ports that you would be apt to visit. As far as the crew's concerned, why, don't give it a thought. I'll attend to that part of it first-off. Possibly I may have to talk to them a little roughly, and in a way that they understand better than you do, but I'll call 'em forward, and you won't be disturbed. As soon as I get 'em straightened out a little, I'll go in

after my mate. As far as pay is concerned, you can give me what you gave the last man, and the same with the mate. I'll tell you frankly, sir, I'd be glad of the billet, and I'm satisfied that I can fill it to your satisfaction."

Duncan reached over and clapped his friend on the shoulder.

"That's the talk, old man—that's just exactly what I was wishing for, only I didn't quite like to suggest it." He turned to his father. "Don't worry about Amos's not being able to run this old packet, dad. And the Lord help the jackie that tries to cross his bows, only,"—he turned to Amos,—"if I were you, old chap, I'd get my mate first, before I'd start in with the scoundrels,—they're an ugly lot when they get the bits in their teeth."

"Oh, that's all right," said Amos. "They know that they're a scurvy lot of mutineers, and they'll darn soon know that I'm a Yankee sailorman. There'll be no trouble,—well, what do you think of it? Now, be perfectly frank,—and if you feel that you'd rather not trust me with the navigation of the vessel, and the responsibility of the lives of all of your party, why, I won't be a bit put out, but I'll just rack off, and try and scare up a man somewhere to take charge until I find a good one."

Mr. White was silent for a moment, while his son watched him expectantly. Then suddenly he reached across the table, and held out his hand to Amos.

"Knapp," he said, "I haven't had business dealings with all sorts of men for thirty years without getting to be a judge of them in a way. I believe that you will make us a good captain, and I'm perfectly willing

to put the responsibility of the schooner and all aboard in your hands. You may take charge whenever you like."

Amos gripped his hand so that the older man winced a little, then rose suddenly to his feet.

"All right, sir,—I'll take a look around my quarters now, and see if there's any blue cloth and gold lace that will fit me. If not, I'll order a suit this afternoon."

CHAPTER IV

"*THE COURSE MADE GOOD*"

AMOS did not waste much time in the vain adornment of his person. In the Captain's locker he found a couple of frayed old blouses with corroded insignia, but neither of them would button across his chest, while the sleeves were halfway to the elbows, so he threw them impatiently back, and stepped on deck.

A few of the sailors were gathered around the windlass, but as he thrust his head up through the hatch his eye fell on a man lounging against the rail on the starboard side of the quarter-deck, watching a shore boat which was pulling up under the schooner's stern. In a half-dozen long steps, his rubber soles making no noise, Amos reached him, gripped his shoulder with one big, sinewy hand, and threw him across the deck.

"G' forward where ye belong, ye Scandinavian scrub! What in the nation d'ye mean by loafin' on this quarter-deck? *Start and go!!*"

The man went, not liking the way the bushy eyebrows came down when he hesitated. Muttering, he joined the group in the bows. Amos followed him.

"Bosun, there!" he bawled down the forward hatchway. A minute later a ferret-faced little German thrust his tow head up through the hatch.

"Vat you vant mit ohl dot——"

"I want you, ye lubber! D'ye hear? I'm Captain Knapp, and I've come aboard to take charge o' this hooker,—and I'm going to do it, by Christopher, if I have to shove every bug-eye of ye on the beach! Savvy? Get all hands for'ard,—shake a leg now,—I got another funeral to go to this afternoon." He shoved his head down through the hatch.

"*B'low, there!*—Break out!!—Up ye come—all hands!! Up with ye, 'r I'll get down there among ye, an' make ye think ye're back on a lime-juicin' wind-jammer, ye grimy sweeps!!!"

The sweetness of this discourse almost brought the tears to the eyes of some of the older men, recalling as it did the innocent days of their youth, when they had been smashed and batted about on deep-sea sailing ships. As from force of habit too deeply rooted to be lightly swept aside, these jumped for the ladder as the hot blast of strident abuse clove the peaceful atmosphere of the forecastle. With the younger men, to whom quick motion was not the reflex of a curse, it was different. After the others had gained the deck with spry steps, came one of these with sulky deliberation. Amos at once recognized him as the man who had attempted to smoke in the owner's gig. Apparently he was an Irish-American of the uglier sort.

"Oh, it's you, my bucko,—takin' yer time, ain't ye? Well, ye swivel-eyed scut, ye can take all the time ye darn please,—the rest of the summer, if you like, loafin' around the Erie Basin, lookin' for a nice soft billet on a pleasure packet. Onto the beach you go, ye tailor, with a recommend from me that 'll keep yer weather eye open for a job until ye get snow-blind, and you'll be darn glad to carry swill to the stokers on a

When he walked forward, he found the man whom he had reprimanded in such fluent terms, standing by the mainmast. As Amos approached, he saluted humbly.

"Well," said Amos, "what do *you* want?"

The man looked down at the deck and shuffled his feet in embarrassment.

"Beg pardon, Cap'n, but I didn't 'xactly,—leastwise, I didn't just ketch—— Say, Cap'n, won't ye give me another chanst, sir? I ain't got no money an'——"

The hard lines on either side of Amos's big features grew deeper.

"Ye didn't, hey? Well, d'ye think ye understand now?"

"Yessir—I won't——"

"All right,—get in that boat and see if ye can't sit tight and behave yourself. Once more, and out ye go, if I have to land ye on a tidewater rock fifty miles offshore!"

Having straightened out his crew, Amos did not try to force things. Indeed, it was hardly necessary, as every man seemed to try to do his best, which was not over and above good, as the former captain had gathered his crew in a hurry and without much care. But Amos felt that with the right kind of handling he might yet have a smart lot of men.

On landing, he left the boat in charge of the coxwain, and went immediately to look for his prospective mate, who was the captain and owner of an oyster sloop on which Amos had worked at odd times the winter and spring before his graduation. The young man was greatly elated at the opportunity, as

the season's work was practically over, and he had nothing in view for the summer. He and Amos went at once to be fitted for their uniforms, which the tailor promised to rush through with all possible haste.

He returned to the landing a little ahead of time, and shortly after the party arrived. If the truth were told, Amos felt far greater diffidence at meeting them than he had experienced in introducing himself to the crew. This was rather accentuated by the fact that he was dressed in his best suit of broadcloth, and resembled a member of the Connecticut legislature rather than the smart captain of a big yacht. Two of the men in the party were acquaintances, which made it rather worse, and on his blandly informing them of his position, they opened their eyes and grinned in a way that made Amos feel like addressing them in the "universal international" language that he had used with the sailors. However, they were gentlemen, and quickly and tactfully acknowledged the situation.

Hardly so with the ladies, of whom there were four. To them it seemed so absolutely incongruous that this big, strapping fellow, with a face as hard and rugged as the old Connecticut stone-walls built by his Puritan ancestors, and elegantly attired in a smooth black cutaway, with a low-cut waistcoat, and a large ready-made tie, should be the captain of the majestic *Meridian,* that a rapid flow of senseless small talk was indispensable to give a plausible excuse for their amusement.

This, however, did not deceive Amos, and his heavy eyebrows came lower and square jaw grew more prominent as he realized that he and not the vapid fire

of foolishness was the veritable object of their mirth. Like most young men, he had yet to learn that a man can be a little ridiculous and yet command respect. And Amos *did* command their respect from the moment of the sharply uttered and sharply executed order to shove off. It was easily apparent to everyone in that boat that there had been a radical change since they had gone ashore. As this fact was sent farther home by every lusty stroke, and the leap of the boat when the oars caught the water, the laughter ceased, and there was a little pause in the nonsense that was passing back and forth. Presently one of the men in the party remarked:

"Knapp, I hardly know whether to call you Captain or Doctor." He turned to the others. "You know, our captain is a physician and surgeon as well as a navigator."

There was a little chorus of surprise, and a girl with a soft voice and long gray eyes turned to Amos.

"I don't understand," she said in a puzzled tone. "Are they joking—or——" Suddenly her face cleared and her eyes lit up in a way that caused Amos to let the boat drop a point off her course. "Why, I remember you,—last year. I knew that I had seen you somewhere. You had a cap with a green tassel, and a gown with a green hood;—of course,—I noticed you when you went by, you were so much bigger than the others and——" She looked confused, and one of the other girls laughed mischievously.

"And shall I tell you what she said, Captain? She said——"

"Catherine!" The gray-eyed girl was crimson. Amos felt sorry for her, and went to the rescue.

"Oh, never mind what it was. I am sure that it was appropriate, and you know that it is contrary to all naval etiquette to talk to the man at the helm."

The others seemed slightly puzzled, as Amos's face was entirely serious, and they were not quite sure whether to take his words in jest or earnest. There was a somewhat embarrassed pause, during which Amos felt that he had "got even," and inwardly chuckled. Until he rounded up under the stern of the schooner the conversation was of the carefully impersonal character peculiar to very young people when they fancy that their dignity is jeopardized; but before Amos gave the order "way enough," and shot the boat in alongside the staging, the girl with the gray eyes turned to him quietly.

"Captain, I am going to break all naval etiquette far enough to apologize for seeming to be rude; also to say that if I were you I should be very, very proud of myself!"

It was only his nautical instinct that saved Amos from tearing the bows off the boat on the schooner's side.

The next three days were very busy ones for the new captain. There were many loose ends about the schooner that needed attention, although she had been in commission only about a month. The rapidity with which a little neglect will compound its interest upon a sailing vessel is remarkable.

On the third day that Amos had been aboard, one of the sailors jammed a sail needle into the palm of his hand with the result that the wound promptly became infected and required surgical interference. This the captain undertook, with the assistance of the stew-

ard, after the usual seagoing custom, but without the customary slovenliness. This piece of minor surgery was the means of establishing a little bond of sympathy between Amos and the girl who had spoken to him in the boat.

Amos had not entered into any of the social festivities, although frequently invited to do so. He felt a natural dislike to mix his professional and social relations, but at the same time he was tactful enough to avoid giving to this feeling any emphasis, so that while he steadily declined invitations ashore he would often go into the cabin after dinner and smoke a cigar with the men.

One evening when all of the others had gone ashore he asked Duncan White about the girl with the long gray eyes whom the others called "Edie."

"Her name is Edith Carter," said Duncan. "She's a daughter of old Major Hampton Carter of South Carolina. Her mother, who died when she was a baby, was Katrina Van der Wort of New York. Father used to know her, and he says that she was the most beautiful thing that he ever saw in his life; also that Edith is the living image of her."

The next day it happened that Miss Carter spent the afternoon on deck, all of the others being ashore. She noticed the sailor who was going about with his hand in a sling, and as Amos passed her she asked the nature of the injury.

"He's got a bad infected wound of the palm," said Amos. "I opened it the day before yesterday, but it doesn't drain as freely as I would like to have it. I'm going to open it up again this afternoon."

Miss Carter's eyes opened wider,

"Who is going to assist you?" she asked.

Amos's big features relaxed into a smile.

"The steward lent a hand before, and told me afterwards that he was sick all the rest of the day. The man hasn't the heart of a cornstalk, and has just about as much power of thought. I told him to pour on some hot water, and he poured it boiling hot, right from the kettle. Luckily, I held my own hand under the stream first to see that it was hot enough." He smiled grimly. "It was." He showed her a great blister that ran across his wrist.

Miss Carter's color came and went. "How awful it might have been for the poor sailor!"

"Yes," said Amos. "*I* appreciated that."

The girl flushed. "Oh, I didn't mean it that way; but, Captain, would you like to have me help you? I know a little about nursing, and I've helped once or twice in the hospital where I used to go to play with the babies."

Amos looked at her thoughtfully. He had a way of resting his eyes on those of another person when he might be thinking of something entirely different—a habit very disconcerting to the victim. As his eyes lingered on the girl's face it never occurred to him to admire its sweetness of feature and expression. He was thinking rather of how decent it was of this butterfly to take such an interest in a Swede sailor with a "sore fin." Up to this point the girl had not attracted him. At times she had embarrassed him slightly, and every time she had left him in something of a study,—her words were so entirely at variance with the type of girl with which he had carelessly classed her. Now, her words had started a train of

thought, and with his eyes on her face, he considered her for a moment in the abstract, while the girl flushed angrily, and wished that she had never made the offer.

Amos came suddenly to, and smiled in a way that was almost paternal. Miss Carter could hardly have believed that his rugged face could assume such an expression of gentle kindliness. Its effect was singularly winning.

"If you are sure that it won't upset you I should be very glad to have you help me," he said.

"Oh, my nerves are good; just send me word when you want me. I must go below now and write some letters." She smiled back at him, and walked to the companionway.

Late that afternoon Amos, with the assistance of Miss Carter, operated on Larsen, the sailor. It proved to be more serious than he had anticipated, as the infection seemed to be progressing rapidly, and for a while he was in two minds whether to treat the man on the ship or send him ashore to the hospital. Finally he decided upon the former, feeling confident of his treatment, and wishing to follow the case along from a professional interest. Miss Carter proved indispensable, and although she once or twice grew very pale, stuck pluckily to her post, and it was not until the last bandage had been secured that Amos realized what an ordeal it had really been for the girl.

He had asked her to hand him the scissors to cut off the loose ends of the bandage, and getting no response, looked up impatiently to learn the cause. She was facing him with a somnambulistic look in her eyes, and a face as white as the enameled bulkhead behind her. Amos caught the helpless expression in

the big eyes—the expression that comes just for an instant when the grip of the will is torn loose from the mind—and as the girl stretched out her hand in a reflex effort to steady herself, Amos was beside her in one long, ungainly stride, swept her up in his arms, and laid her gently on a locker. In a few moments she had come to herself again, filled with contrition for her weakness. Amos, however, maintained most emphatically, and with a note of aggression in his voice, that she had proved herself an assistant of most exceptional ability and unquestionable nerve, in defense of which statements, witness his hand and seal, as Master Mariner, Doctor of Medicine, and his cartel and defiance to all such as might dispute it.

No less appreciative was Larsen the Swede, who, as soon as the condition of his hand would permit, set about a wonderful piece of sail-cloth drawn work, destined for a trunk cover, which, in due time, was presented to his nurse.

Late that night, when the schooner slept, the sleepy anchor watch peered curiously through the murk at the square outlines of the skipper's big frame silhouetted blackly against the water, as sitting astride the after bitts, and leaning both elbows on the rail, he sucked hungrily at his pipe and watched the sparkling lights twinkle over the sleeping city.

CHAPTER V

AN ACCIDENT

THE university fledgelings had spread their feeble wings and flitted forth from their nests in the grand old City of Elms. The boughs were vacant; the campus as hollow as a last year's robin's nest.

The *Meridian* party were among the last to leave, and after many arguments and much trepidation on the part of the more timid, Halifax was chosen as the next port to be visited. There was really no reason why a schooner of the size and equipment of the *Meridian* should not go anywhere; nevertheless, when the decision was finally made known to Amos, his face darkened slightly, for before his eyes there was a picture of fogs, liners, and East winds, and below decks a cargo that no insurance could cover. Yet, after all, the schooner was stanch and well-found, the captain competent, and the crew all that could be reasonably expected, so when Mr. White told Amos that it was his wish to sail for Halifax on the following day, Amos simply saluted and replied that they were ready to leave at a moment's notice.

At seven the following morning they weighed anchor, and by evening had laid Block Island abeam, and were plowing along with a freshening breeze from the southwest.

That night, after dinner, Amos walked aft and joined the group on the quarter-deck. There were eight in the party in the cabin. A Mr. and Mrs. Hunter from Boston; Miss Carter; an English girl, Miss Agnes Charteris, who was visiting Mrs. Hunter; a classmate of Duncan White's named Goodrich; Mr. White and Duncan. Amos drifted aft to where the cabin party was located, and was soon discussing affairs nautical. He had associated all of his life with seafarers, and being a close observer, and not lacking in the dry New England humor which was a part of his birthright, was soon giving them homely marine sketches of Yankee sailormen, in the deep vibrant voice that was so strident and raucous when raised in anger.

Soon they picked up a coasting schooner, looming ahead, a square black patch on the somber sky-line. Her starboard light glowed out suddenly as they laid her abeam, while from her decks there came a low murmur of hoarse voices, the squeak and whine of an accordion, and the sharp yapping of a small dog. This furnished Amos with an illustration, and as he described the hard lives of the men whom they were dropping astern, they could almost see them clinging with numbed hands to the icy shrouds, feebly beating the ice from the stiffened halliards while the Arctic blast roared through the crackling canvas and the freezing spray transformed the watch on deck into pillars of ice. Amos had much of the bard in his make-up, and in the glamour of the soft summer night, he turned the pages of the great mysterious book that lay beneath their vessel's keel. From that picture he carried them hundreds of miles to the next, and they saw

the same men in the port of Pensacola, gilding with the hard dollars they had torn from the grasp of the sea, the dance hall of Nicodemus the Greek; where the steam piano drowns the ribald curses and blasphemies of the men who daily lay their lives in the hollow of God's hand, and where the hot Matanzas rum thaws out the icy coating of the frozen north, and warms to life the black passions underneath.

Then, suddenly realizing that the conversation had become a monologue, he rose abruptly, and said good-night. A silence fell after he had left, all being unwilling to break through the veil of imagery inspired by his tales. When finally they went below, Amos took the watch, for there still clung about the deck an aura that he was loath to leave.

About three o'clock in the morning the wind dropped and the atmosphere grew rather heavy and oppressive. The slight roll of the schooner was enough to disturb the sleepers below, and Miss Carter, waking, heard Amos's softly given order to rig out the tackles on the booms to prevent their jarring when they swung the sheets taut. The thought of this great strong man awake and watchful not only of their safety, but their comfort, was rather sweet, and for some time she lay awake and indulged it, preferring it to sleep.

When Amos went off watch a little breeze had fanned in from the south, and the schooner was beginning to forge ahead again. The morning soon broke, and all the following day they sailed, seeing no land, and few vessels, as there was a haze on the waters. The air was pleasant enough, but altogether too hot for the season of the year to suit Amos. The breeze was very fickle, going all around the compass,

and in the middle of the afternoon it dropped flat, while the sultry haze thickened, giving the atmosphere a queer yellowish tinge.

About sundown he noticed that the glass was rising, as it often does before an easterly gale, and a little later a long rhythmic swell, rolling in from the eastward, made itself apparent.

Soon the darkness fell—a black, viscid, sticky darkness that blotted out the bows of the schooner from the stern sheets. When the guests came on deck after dinner, all unconscious of any cause of apprehension, they heard an unusual noise and confusion coming from the waist. A little damp breeze had sprung up, and was blowing over the port bow. Amos was standing silently near the wheel.

"What are the sailors making all that noise about, Captain?" asked Mrs. Hunter.

"They are double-reefing the foresail, Mrs. Hunter."

"Why, bless my soul, Captain, we are heading a little south of east!" suddenly exclaimed Mr. White, taking a peep at the binnacle.

"Yes, sir," said Amos, "I want more offing—and I want it as soon as I can get it."

"I thought you only took in a reef when the wind was blowing very hard, Captain Knapp," said Miss Carter.

"Sometimes it's easier to take a reef a little before the wind begins to blow," Amos answered; "and unless I'm greatly mistaken, it will be blowing very hard before morning; but there is no cause for worry," he added. "We will have plenty of sea room, and it won't catch us napping."

There was a moment's silence, then Mr. White asked anxiously: "Do you mean that you think that we are in for a gale, Amos?"

"Yes, sir. There is every indication of it—has been all day in fact. I would have run in somewhere if I could have gotten there. It may be pretty uncomfortable for a day or two, but there is no danger, and it may not amount to much after all—only I will take no chances."

"Wouldn't it be a good plan to get into some port before the storm breaks?" asked Mr. Hunter anxiously.

An impatient answer rose to Amos's lips, but he managed to smother it.

"I think not," he answered; "the weather's thickening and if we got caught alongshore with a fog and a gale coming in from the sea, it might be embarrassing. Well offshore we're safe enough—only, as I say, it may be a little uncomfortable."

"How soon do you think that the storm will break, Captain?" asked Mrs. Hunter.

"An 'easter' doesn't 'break' exactly," Amos replied. "It just starts in easily, and gradually. Probably by midnight it will be blowing pretty hard." He did not tell them that in his private opinion by midnight the schooner would be hove-to under a double-reefed foresail, with her lee scuppers buried in the brine.

Since they had come on deck the motion of the schooner had increased, and instead of the long, even rise and fall which they had noticed at dinner, she was beginning to dip fore and aft in a way that soon made itself felt by the more susceptible. There was little

comfort to be had on deck, for the cold, wet wind was gradually gaining weight and was accompanied by a nasty drizzle of rain. The cabin party soon went below, and a little later Amos joined them, knowing that his unfavorable weather forecast must have caused some apprehension. Mr. Hunter and Miss Charteris had succumbed to seasickness and had retired to their staterooms, but Miss Carter was in the saloon playing cribbage with Duncan. The other men were in Mr. White's room smoking and talking.

Miss Carter looked up and smiled as Amos came in.

"Well, Captain, what are you doing with the weather up there? It seems as if your prophecy were coming true. My,—what a plunge!"

"Yes," said Amos, steadying himself with one hand on a stanchion, "the old girl's getting quite skittish, isn't she. But she's a fine sea-boat. Buoyant as a bladder!"

"May I go on deck? I'm tired of cards and I want to see what it looks like up there."

"Then all you need to do is to douse the glim and shut your eyes," said Amos. "It's as black as the lining of a flue, but if you would like to get the air, of which there is plenty, I'll get you some oilers and a sou'wester and take you up in the bow where you can feel her dance."

"Oh, I should love that! Don't you want to come, Duncan?"

"No, thanks. The cabin's good enough for me on a night like this."

Amos got a big oilskin overcoat and a sou'wester, and they went up the companionway. As she stepped on deck Miss Carter would probably have gone head

first into the lee scuppers, if a strong hand had not fastened on her shoulder.

"Always turn to windward as you come up through the hatch," said Amos's deep voice in her ear. "And never let go one hand until you see where you are going to grab with the next. Now take my arm,—so, —it's always pleasanter to hang on than to be hung on to,—I mean for a lady, of course."

Miss Carter's laugh was lost in the rush of the wind. Then she wondered what had made this big, strong chap think of a little point like that.

With some difficulty, Amos piloted his charge well up into the schooner's bows, and took a point of vantage behind the windlass. If the girl had been less securely moored she would never have made the passage minus a few bruises, as the list of the vessel, with the murky darkness and the chaotic confusion of the phosphorescent crests of the great surges that loomed suddenly out of the darkness and seemed about to overwhelm them, had a most unbalancing effect on the unaccustomed eye. The wind, too, was now rapidly increasing in velocity, and the weight of a sudden flaw as it glanced up from the smooth side of a sea, was rather terrifying. At first she felt inclined to retreat to the cabin with all possible haste, but after a few quick rises and swooping plunges, the spirit of the storm seemed to get into her blood. All sense of fear suddenly vanished, and in its place came a wild exhilaration. Her heart seemed to leap in sympathy with every leap of the vessel and she felt a strength such as she had never dreamed of before. It comes to a cavalryman sometimes, with the crash and clatter of the charging troop around him, and the great shoulder

muscles of his charger working between his knees; sometimes the engine driver has it as he presses the throttle and feels the responsive throb of the Titan of steel beneath him. Then, as she was marveling at this wonderful new sensation, the man beside her began to describe it, just as it was, thrill for thrill, and impulse for impulse, resonantly, against the scream of the rising gale.

Soon he took her below again, for an Arctic chill was woven through the squalls of wind and rain. She was very silent when they returned to the cozy cabin, but Amos knew that it was not through fear. Rather, it was the silence of the true musician, who has just listened to a wonderful symphony.

Amos was on deck at frequent intervals the whole night through, and at three o'clock in the morning it was blowing so hard, and the sea was growing so wicked, that he decided to heave-to. The double-reefed mainsail and forestaysail were securely furled with extra lashings, and the schooner was hove-to, so as to ride about seven points on the wind, under a close-hauled, double-reefed foresail. As it was getting even thicker the fog-horn was manned, extra lookouts were stationed, and the captain took up his long night's vigil on the slanting deck.

Towards morning it eased a bit, whereupon the sea combed so wickedly that a great green crest, shooting over the weather bow, thundered down on the deck, giving the lookout a quick plunge for his life, and carrying with it a section of the lee bulwarks. The crash of the sea wakened Edith, and above the din on deck she heard the captain order an oil bag hung over the bow, and extra lashings on the boats.

Daybreak brought little cheer. The sky-line was a near blending of leaden mist and cold dirty-greenish sea mounting savagely under smears of streaky spume. Overhead, the smoky scud, flying at appalling speed, seemed in danger of being torn by the topmasts, and under the bilges was a stealthy purr and hiss as the schooner struggled up from the trough of the sea.

After breakfast Amos went into the cabin, where he found Miss Carter and Mr. White—the only survivors of the whole party. Mr. White was too old a yachtsman to be upset by a trifle like an easterly gale, and Miss Carter, by the strange law of dispensation that sometimes grants an immunity to the inexperienced in whom it is to be least expected, was radiant at her unlooked-for seagoing qualities. What pleased Amos the most was the evident fact of neither being in any way troubled concerning the dangers about them; for this was a tacit acknowledgment of the confidence they placed in their skipper.

"Oh, Captain Knapp!" exclaimed the girl, as he entered, "I want you to use your influence with this tyrant who insists upon keeping me imprisoned in this stuffy cabin. I'm simply crazy to go on deck—I've never seen the ocean in a storm from a small vessel. Mr. White is just too co[illegible] on deck, so he insists on keeping me down he[illegible]se him."

Amos smiled and wiped the glistening spray from his heavy eyebrows.

"I can't say that I blame him much," he answered. "What's the use of owning a schooner if one can't enjoy certain prerogatives. But the schooner's making very good weather of it now, and if Mr. White can

manage to get along without you for a few minutes, I'll guarantee to take good care of you." He looked expectantly at the owner.

"Do you think that it would really be safe, Captain," asked Mr. White anxiously. "A slippery deck is a pretty precarious place for a lady with big daring and little feet."

Amos was about to reply when the mate thrust his head down through the companionway.

"Big liner coming up on the sta-bo'rd bow, sir."

"Excuse me a moment," said Amos; "I'll get you some oilers and then come back and try and persuade Mr. White."

"I've got the oilers down here," said Miss Carter.

"All right—put 'em on. Be right back." He went on deck, and while he was studying the approaching steamer through the glass, there came a hail from the companionway, and looking aft he saw the girl clinging to a skylight. Mr. White's yachting cap was just visible above the edge of the hatch and one hand was gesticulating in futile remonstrance.

If Miss Carter had heard the exclamation which the sight called from the Captain's lips, she would probably have been displeased.

"Stay right where you are—don't move!" cried Amos.

Whether through sheer perversity, or false confidence, the warning was disregarded. The girl tried to step around the corner of the skylight to reach a point of greater security. At the same instant, a more than usually heavy sea caught the weather run, and threw the bows upward and to leeward. Miss Carter made a

slightly she closed her eyes and turned rather pale, but did not utter a sound.

"Good," said Amos cheerily, when he had finished his examination, "it's just as I thought,—simple fracture of the big bone. Now we're going to set it, and then put you in your bunk, and tuck you up so snug that you can't wink. This is going to hurt for just a moment, and then all you've got to do is to lie in dry dock for a while, and be read to, and petted, and fed dainties——"

He was purposely talking fast and foolishly, to keep the girl's attention from the rather grim preparations.

"Steward there,—come here and play you're a table, —no keep your hands away from there and just sit tight and do as you're told; hold this splint,—so; now, Miss Carter, I'm going to hurt you just for a second, —so. Steward pull gently on this bight,—handsomely —h-a-n-dsome-l-y,—there. Hand me that other splint. Now hold that foot just so, Mr. White, and don't let it budge,—that's well,—way enough—all over!"

The process of setting a fracture of that sort, no matter how skillfully and gently done, is very far from being a painless operation, and Miss Carter almost fainted before it was over. She did not speak nor utter a sound, but when Amos glanced keenly down at her face to see how she had stood the ordeal, it was as white as the pillow under her head. Her forehead was bathed in perspiration and a big tear stood in either long half-closed eye. Hard as he was his own grew a little dim as he looked down at her.

"You plucky little thing,—you've got more nerve to the square inch than any man I ever saw!"

She looked up quickly at the unusual gruffness of

his voice,—guessed the cause, and smiled at him weakly. Amos leaned over and patted her hand.

"Can you stand a little more pain,—in a different place,—just for a minute? You don't want to wear an ugly scar, you know."

Her lip trembled. "I'll try, Captain."

Amos cleansed the scalp wound and sewed it up neatly and quickly. It seemed to him as if every stitch went into his heart. As before, the girl bore it without a murmur. When he had finished, and the dressing was applied, they raised her gently and laid her on her bunk, Amos loosening her dress and making her as comfortable as possible. When he had wedged her in securely, with light pillows jammed against the rolling board, and there was nothing more to be done for the present, he turned to leave her.

She raised a detaining little hand.

"Captain Knapp,—thank you *so* much," her voice faltered,—"and, Captain, promise me one thing,—promise that you won't blame yourself the tiniest bit for my getting hurt,—for letting me go on deck,—because really it was my fault for not waiting. You won't worry about that, will you?"

Amos looked at her for a moment and tried to speak,—tried twice and made a sorry job of it. Then with a sudden impulse he leaned down and lifted the little hand to his lips. A moment later she heard his heavy tread on the deck above her.

That hour was the real date of the birth of Amos Knapp.

CHAPTER VI

UNCHARTED SHOALS

DURING the rest of the day the force of the gale increased and the glass rose steadily, but toward evening the wind hauled around to the north again, and a clear streak appeared on the western horizon. At midnight it had moderated slightly, and Amos ordered the jib and a scrap of mainsail set. As soon as seemed advisable he headed back for Boston, as Mr. White was anxious to put Miss Carter in the care of an experienced surgeon as soon as possible.

The dismay of the rest of the party at the news of the accident was somewhat modified by deep personal emotions caused by the big following sea as the schooner slid off before the wind. Duncan and his father were the only ones who dared attempt personal expressions of sympathy until they had slipped into the more sheltered waters of Boston Bay.

Before the anchor was dropped, Mr. White was speeding ashore in the gig. An hour later he returned, wearing the placid air of the man who, having done everything in his power, awaits the result with a calm mind.

"I had the very devil of a time getting old Couteau on the 'phone," he said to Amos, who was standing at the ladder to receive him. "He's an old friend of

the Carters; mine, too, for that matter. I don't believe there's a better surgeon in the country—is there?"

"I don't know of any," said Amos, smiling. He had heard heard some queer stories of Dr. Couteau, but never any insinuations against his professional ability.

"Well," resumed Mr. White, "he ought to be good—he's hard enough to catch. First I tried his office, and was told that he was visiting a patient, cutting off his keloid, or his coupons, or something,—I'll bet the latter were included. The people there said he had just left, and referred me to the Puritan Hospital. So I tried the Puritan, and cornered him—though it seems an odd place for him. Ever hear him swear?"

"No, sir," said Amos. "I never met him."

"That's probably the reason. Well, they say that he's the roughest spoken and the tenderest hearted man in the profession. When I just called him up and asked him if I should send Edith to the hospital here, he growled back: 'Not by a blankety-blank sight, she'd need a fresh hot-water bag every ten minutes in that cold-storage crypt. Those frozen pirates will pack her leg in an Eastport herring box, charge her a New York price, then test her blood, and if it doesn't run blue enough they'll put her on a straight bean diet.' The old man's coming up himself on the next train."

Amos listened to all of this in some trepidation, and decided to put a more neatly applied dressing on the fractured leg, but when he went below he found the girl so comfortable that he was unwilling to sacrifice her comfort to his professional pride. While he

was talking with her they heard a boat come alongside, and a moment later a man's deep voice that seemed to him to be strangely familiar. Following, came a heavy step descending the companionway, and Amos, glancing at Miss Carter, was surprised to see that her eyes were sparkling and her face rosy.

A tall figure brushed roughly past Amos, and, leaning over the bunk, seemed about to gather the girl in his arms. At this, Amos's professional solicitude asserted itself over his surprise.

"Why, Edith! My poor, dear——" began the newcomer, when Amos interrupted sharply:

"Be careful there! Look out for that leg, *look out,* d'ye hear!"

The man turned on him suddenly, and Amos discovered to his amazement that it was Douglas Ellsworth.

"Why, Amos!" he exclaimed, "you here? Well, upon my word——"

"I'm the captain of this schooner," replied Amos shortly, puzzled and vaguely uncomfortable, "and I've been taking care of Miss Carter in the absence of anyone else."

Douglas stared for a moment, then turned to Edith.

"You poor little girl!" he exclaimed, tenderly taking her hand in both of his. "I met Mr. White at the express office, and he told me of your accident, but I didn't wait long enough to learn that you were in such excellent hands." He turned to Amos with a smile which the latter in some way resented.

"You know each other, don't you?" cried Edith, her face still rosy and her hand still nestling between

Ellsworth's. "Oh, Douglas, Captain Knapp has been *so* good, and kind, and skillful! I don't know what would have happened to me without him."

Ellsworth turned to Amos with a somewhat quizzical smile upon his handsome face. Amos had risen to his feet, and stood awkward and embarrassed, the situation not at all clear to him.

"You've put me everlastingly in your debt, Amos," said Ellsworth heartily. He turned to Edith. "I think he has a right to be told, Edith, don't you? You see, Amos," he went on, not waiting for a reply, "Miss Carter and I are engaged to be married. It hasn't been announced yet, so you shall be one of the first to congratulate us."

Amos's face had lost a bit of its usual high color.

"I beg your pardon," he said, a bit awkwardly. "I —I didn't know that, of course, and when you came crashing in that way—I didn't understand. Please let me congratulate you both with all of my heart." He backed toward the door, where for a moment he paused.

"Look me up before you go ashore, Douglas," he said, and nodding to Edith, turned to the companionway.

He could not get on deck quickly enough. Mr. White spoke to him as he went forward, but getting no reply looked after him curiously. He had seen Ellsworth before he went below, and knew that Amos was with Edith. The occurrence gave this philosopher room for thought. He lit a fresh cigar, and stared pensively at a cabbage that was floating past on the tide.

"H'm, Amos has gone up against something harder

than the crew! Too bad—too bad; if he wasn't born on Beacon Street he's worth a dozen like Ellsworth!"

In the middle of the afternoon the gig was sent in for Dr. Couteau. When presently the boat returned, Amos saw in the stern the man whose name the last three years had taught him to revere. Hardly waiting for the boat to be hauled alongside, Dr. Couteau stepped off onto the staging and came briskly over the side. He was a tall, sinewy man with a fierce, lean face, deeply lined and intent, in expression reminding Amos of a tough old hound puzzling out a cooling trail. The suggestion was accentuated by the deep furrows crossing the jaw, and forming 'dewlaps' when the head was inclined. The brows, heavy and overhanging, drooped over the keen gray eyes, which gleamed out as if through the visor of a helmet. It was a nervous face, but strong and masterful, indicating the character without betraying the emotions of the man. One hardly noticed the grizzled mustache and scrubby beard, so striking were the other features. A black cigar was clenched between his teeth, and as he sucked away at it one could see the ash lengthen at every vigorous inhalation.

"Hello, White," he said, as he stepped on deck. "Here I am, but I can't stay long. Better keep the boat there. I've got to catch the next train back."

"No, you don't," said Mr. White. "I've been five years trying to get you aboard my schooner, and now that I've got you I'm going to keep you for a while. Come down and have a drink,—have a cigar,—have the boat!"

"Thanks, but let's have a look at Edie first." He

strode to the companionway and descended, Mr. White following.

"Come down, Captain," said Mr. White, turning to Amos.

Dr. Couteau walked to Edith's room, where he was introduced to Ellsworth, to whom he gave a gruff "How d'ye do?" His hard face softened as he looked at the patient.

"Well, little girl, trying to navigate alone, were you? Should have thought that there were men enough on this packet to keep you off your beam-ends." He gently exposed the bandaged leg and gazed at the splints in some surprise.

"Who the devil put that thing on?"

"I did," said Amos from the doorway.

Dr. Couteau turned and surveyed him in surprise, then re-examined the dressing.

"What did you think you were trying to do—fish a spar?"

"That was the theory of it," replied Amos.

Again the surgeon turned and stared at him, but the stare was as coolly returned. Mr. White grew evidently uneasy.

"Is there anything that you would like to ask Captain Knapp, Doctor? The Captain has been taking care of Edith, you know. He sewed up the cut in her head also."

"What the deuce are you talking about, White? What do *I* want to ask *him?* How did he sew it up—with a sail needle and a palm?"

Edith tried to speak, but the surgeon interrupted her.

"Now keep quiet, child, while I look at this leg."

He turned to Ellsworth. "Young man, get me a pair of scissors."

Amos turned on his heel and went on deck. After the events of the morning he did not feel that he could stand much bedeviling. Half an hour later, as he was giving some instructions to the carpenter, Dr. Couteau came on deck. He walked over to where Amos was standing. Amos sent the carpenter forward and looked up.

"Keep Miss Carter's leg just as it is; don't take off any of the weight. You are going back to New York, and then you can send her up to the Puritan Hospital. I'll have an ambulance meet her. Be careful when you move her. In the meantime, don't get monkeying with those splints!"

Amos turned slowly with a glitter in his eyes.

"Did you take down the dressings?" he asked slowly.

"Of course I did. Did you think that I was going to trust to——"

"Was the fracture put up all right?"

"H'mph! I suppose so," replied the surgeon grudgingly.

"Then what in hell are you growling about? D'ye think you're the only man on earth with savvy enough to put up a fracture or stitch up a rip in a scalp? It's not *my* job, anyway! I signed on as skipper, not as surgeon. I'll not be responsible for the case at all! If I pile this packet on the beach before we sight the Statue of Liberty you can come around and kick! *Carpenter!*"

He proceeded to give the carpenter a few directions, utterly ignoring the presence of the surgeon. Dr. Cou-

teau, after a transient moment of utter paralysis, sat himself upon the sliding hatch of the main companion-way, whence he regarded Amos in thoughtful silence until the latter had finished his orders and started to walk forward.

"Look here, young man!" called Dr. Couteau, and the peculiarity of his tone made Amos look around despite himself. "Mr. White has been telling me a few things about you. What d'you intend to be, anyway, a sailorman or a surgeon?"

"Unless I wanted to be a surgeon d'ye think I'd stand here and take a lot of Irish compliments from a man that I don't owe anything?" demanded Amos fiercely.

"Then I'll tell you what to do," replied the surgeon curtly. "When you get to New York come around to my office and see me. I'm not as ambitious as I was twenty years ago, and I need an assistant built on your lines to infuse some new life into the practice. Maybe we can talk business. If I've said anything to hurt your feelings, why, I'm sorry. In the meantime, try and get that lofty spirit of yours in hand,—doesn't pay, young man,—doesn't pay. Well, see you later, I hope. Good-by."

He turned sharply and disappeared below, leaving Amos staring after him in astonishment.

Dr. Couteau left shortly after, and as soon as the boat had shoved off, Mr. White sent word for Amos to go to his cabin. Amos went below rather expecting a reprimand for the way in which he had talked to the surgeon.

"Captain," said Mr. White, "how soon can we start for New York?"

abstracted eyes into the not very distant past, sounds so familiar that they failed to call him back to the eventful present wove themselves directly into the fabric of his thoughts.

A quick, firm step, wonted to his sense as the taste of his old brier pipe, vibrated through the thin bulkhead, followed by an odd little scratching noise, running longitudinally down his door, and interpreted to mean that Ellsworth had just returned from his fraternity house. It was the old customary signal that they had always used between them as room-mates.

"Come in, Dug," called Amos in answer, even before a consciousness of his surroundings had returned to him.

Ellsworth entered in the same breezy, boyish, lighthearted way, and just as of old and as Amos knew he would, picked his little tobacco bag from the top of the locker, and fishing a crumpled wad of cigarette papers from his watch-pocket, proceeded to roll himself a cigarette. Ellsworth always had cigarette papers, but never tobacco; a commentary which doubtless owed its cause to the wrinkles formed around the pocket of a well-fitting garment by the presence of a tobacco bag therein. Amos's garments were not always well-fitting—but they usually contained tobacco.

"Well, Amos, my son," said Ellsworth genially, as he handed Amos the pouch, "seems like old times to see you sitting there half-dressed, gazing into the infinite, when you ought to be out enjoying yourself."

"Yes," drawled Amos lazily, "and it seems like old times, Dug, to see you standing there smoking my tobacco, and drooling good advice from a firm footing of fortune that you probably never did anything to

deserve. You're a lucky scoundrel, if there ever was one."

"Ah, Amos, don't belittle my talents—nor courage. 'Faint heart ne'er won fair lady-o'!"

Amos's bushy brows contracted somewhat. His last mental picture of Ellsworth in the guise of a knight-errant obtruded unpleasantly upon his gaze.

"By George, Amos, do you realize that the last time we saw each other was down at Shoal Harbor, when we were boarding at the Stanleys'?"

"Yes," answered Amos laconically, too much occupied in cramming flake-cut into his old brier to look up.

There was a moment's pause, and when Ellsworth went on, although he spoke lightly, there was an odd note in his voice which did not escape Amos.

"Do you remember the tremendous heart-to-heart talk we had, in which you gave me such good salty advice in regard to Hope? Well, you struck it about right, old chap."

"So it appears," said Amos dryly.

Ellsworth threw him another quick glance.

"Have you seen anything of Hope or her father since?" he asked.

"No," said Amos. His gray eyes swept upward until they found Ellsworth's, where for a moment they rested steadily. "Have you?"

Ellsworth's glance flickered down toward the deck.

"Oh, no," he answered readily. "I haven't been near Shoal Harbor since that summer."

It seemed to Amos, watching him keenly from the shadow, that an odd look of relief had crept into Ellsworth's face.

"Well, Amos," he resumed, with a tone that sug-

gested a certain dignity of happiness, quite new to Amos's knowledge of him. "There's an end to all that sort of foolishness. You don't know what a different thing it is, Amos, to be really seriously in love with a girl, clear through. The mere prospect of such happiness is sort of terrifying, and when a chap's been a little careless at times, as I'll admit that I have, the faintest thought of the lady's ever tripping over some of the loose ends of his life, is alarming out of all proportion."

"You might buoy them so that you can steer clear," suggested Amos. "Uncharted reefs are always the most dangerous."

"It seems to me that it's wiser to keep out of such waters altogether," replied Ellsworth.

"I don't agree with you. There sometimes comes a tide in the affairs of men which may set you down into those uncharted waters all unbeknownst, and then you're apt to get in trouble."

"Possibly." There was the faintest trace of shortness in Ellsworth's tone. "Thanks for the allegory, anyway. Just as of old, Amos, the soundness of your advice is only equaled by the unpleasantness of following it."

"Yes, and if it wasn't, you'd never take the trouble to look for it. Well, that's all you'll get to-night, anyway. I don't know that I'm such a brimming font of knowledge, after all. I advise Mr. White to let me sign on as skipper and then take the old wagon out in an 'easter,' give them an all-round shake-up, and succeed in breaking a passenger's leg. Then I dispense a cargo of professional advice and get cussed out by this wind-riven old bone-shark, Couteau. Now,

I'm giving you a little sage moral counsel that you don't like the taste of for a cent. No more to-night, my son. The business of this office is closed for the day. Tell me about yourself. I've seen your name in the magazines until I'm tired of it. When are you going to get after something big?"

"As soon as I get a chance. Unfortunately, modern popular fancy puts a premium on light work; not cheap work, you understand, but light. People have so many troubles of their own that they turn to literature for diversion rather than instruction, and instruction always comes cheap compared with amusement. You can hear a rattling good lecture by a master-mind, and on almost any subject, for nothing, but you have to loosen up your wallet to see vaudeville."

Amos nodded, and there came at that moment a rap on his door.

"What is it?"

"Breeze comin' out o' the nor'west, sir."

"All right. Call the mate, and tell him to make sail. Call away the gig."

"Call away the gig, sir," replied the quartermaster.

Amos began to pull on his outer clothes, and Ellsworth went to bid the others good-night. As he left the stateroom it suddenly occurred to him that in the course of their conversation Amos had never once mentioned himself, and that he knew no more concerning his prospects than when he had first seen him on coming aboard.

"Like Amos," he thought, "but then I suppose he's had a pretty slow sort of a time."

Amos went on deck, where he bade Ellsworth good-

by, and then proceeded to get the schooner under way. When the gig returned the cable was hove short up, and before long the vessel was standing out to sea.

Two bells were struck, and three and four, and still Amos stood leaning against the fore-shrouds, watching the phosphorescent flashes thrown from the schooner's bows as she met the lazy swells. When, finally, he raised his eyes to the velvet dome above the tapering topmasts the wistful face which had been gazing at him from the sea was there also. When, with a growl, he threw his eyes to the starlit sky ahead he saw it again, forming in the nebulous mist gathered out of space. Walking to the stern he shot a critical glance at the pale pyramid of canvas towering over his head, and where his eyes found a resting place in the diaphanous expanse he found the face patiently awaiting recognition.

With a growl in his throat he walked over and sat upon the hatch of the companionway.

"I suppose that I should have given him some excuse to talk about her," he said to himself, "but somehow I couldn't. I believe he'd a hanged sight rather talk about himself, anyway." He stepped below to look at the chart, then walked aft for a peep at the compass.

"Quartermaster,—taffrail log."

"Taf'r'l log, sir."

CHAPTER VII

AMOS MAKES A LANDFALL

EDITH CARTER'S first perception the following morning was that of a thud and jar immediately over her head, which smote on her dazed senses with the shock of a blow. Close upon it followed the voice of the skipper, which found its way to her stateroom, though muffled by the tarpaulin thrown across her skylight preparatory to the scrubbing of the decks.

"Light that tackle along the decks, Olsen. *You* ought to know better than to drop a heavy block on the quarter-deck. Now then, overhaul and hook on! Look sharp, there! That main-boom 'll be across the deck——" The rest was lost in an unintelligible growl as the captain walked forward, and shortly after she was soothed to sleep again by the sibilant whisper of the ki-ya brooms as they ground the sand into the snowy decks, the "pat-pat" of squeegees, and the "pad-pad" of naked feet beating a staccato accompaniment.

An hour later she was awakened by two modest little knocks which seemed entirely disproportionate to the cause thereof, for as she called a drowsy "come in," the door swung ajar, and she beheld Amos towering on the threshold with what seemed to be a small bolster under either arm.

"Probably he did," replied Amos with truthful candor. He narrowly escaped adding, "He used to chin about so many girls," but pulled up in time to say, "Names never impressed me much; I was too busy."

"The first time that I saw Douglas," she continued, "was at a football game, and I shall never forget it as long as I live——" The whole story was coming out now with the usual lack of reserve which something in the man before her called forth from all conditions of people.

"He was the hero of the hour; everybody said he played the whole game, and that it was only through his wonderful runs and tackles that a disgraceful beating was turned into a close victory. I never had understood the game until that day, and I didn't at the time, but that evening at the hop——" She paused abruptly, and the look of astonishment that came when she realized how she was opening her heart unasked to this stranger was followed by blushes and confusion.

To hide this Amos talked on evenly until she recovered her poise.

When at length he left her and made his way on deck the whole story of Edith's love affair was as clear to him as if he had been watching each successive step. He could appreciate how of all men Ellsworth would be most quick to see that this beautiful girl was of quite a different mold from the usual type of womankind to which he had been accustomed, and how in the months that had followed he had always been careful to let her see him only at his best, while she had accepted him simply and naturally for what she wished to have him be. Their early friend-

ship was like a tennis duel between two good players; one playing for the health and pleasure of the game, the other to win. Douglas Ellsworth *must* win—and always, or the time was wasted. As a boy, he might play marbles all the afternoon, and if at supper time he had no more than when he started—which was unusual—the afternoon's pleasure had been thrown away.

The trip to New York was uneventful, and when the schooner had made her berth, Duncan went ashore and telephoned immediately for the ambulance, which arrived as Amos was carefully landing the patient. When she was carried ashore everything was in readiness. The boyish surgeon conducted them to the end of the wharf, where the ever-ready " 'bus " was backed up with its sliding stretcher pulled out to receive the one upon which the patient was lying, while close at hand the ubiquitous policeman held at bay the little crowd of morbidly curious.

" Good-by, Captain Knapp! " cried Edith gayly. " Now, remember, you have promised to come and see me at the hospital."

" Good-by, Miss Carter,—yes, I'll come."

The tailboard was slammed in place, the gong sounded its startled clatter, the ambulance surgeon swung up onto his seat, where as a special mark of courtesy and strictly against the rules of the hospital, Duncan had already been permitted to perch himself, and the ambulance sped upon its way.

The *Meridian* was deserted of her guests, all having gone ashore to return later in the evening, as the idea of a cruise had not been abandoned. Mr. White was still aboard.

"Captain," he said, as Amos stepped on the deck, "come down below. I want to have a talk with you."

When they had seated themselves, Mr. White lit a cigar and turned to him.

"Amos," he said, "we've about decided to start for Newport the day after to-morrow, and before we leave I want you to go around and see Dr. Couteau. I want to say right now that I'd rather have you captain this old packet than any other man I've ever had aboard of her, but we all agree that it would be dead wrong of us to keep you here when you can do so much better for yourself in the line of your profession. I find that I can get a skipper—I don't say that he will fill your place—but a man whom I know all about, and who comes well recommended, and I can get him to-morrow, if necessary. So I want you to go up and see old Couteau, and tell him just how you're fixed. If he says that he doesn't need an assistant just now, or to come around and see him later, or hedges in any way, come right back aboard, and I'll let the other man go. But I don't think that he will, from what he said in Boston. At any rate, you run around and see him, and have a talk. Then come back and tell me the result,—and, look here, don't get mad and mop up the office with him, or anything like that. It might give him an undue prejudice against you."

"Mr. White," said Amos, "if I'd been your son you couldn't have done more for me or given me better advice, and I can't tell you how much I appreciate it. Everything's snug aboard the schooner. I might go up at once."

"That's a good idea, Amos. I would go right up now."

Amos thanked him, and went up to his room to change his clothes. Twenty minutes later he was back in the city again, bound across town for Dr. Couteau's office, which was in the fashionable part of the city, just off Fifth Avenue. For the first time in his life, as he stood before the somewhat imposing entrance, he felt diffidence at the prospect of a business interview. This was partly due to the knowledge of his professional inexperience, partly to that glamour in the atmosphere of a great city which is inevitably felt by anyone of somewhat provincial association, no matter how strong his individuality. Amos was absolutely unable to form any estimate of his professional value to a man like the one he had come to see, and consequently did not know just what attitude to take.

All of Amos's association with New York had been during one summer which he had spent in and about a Brooklyn shipyard, when he had lived in an unpretentious boarding house upon an unheard-of Brooklyn side street, where the foliage hung heavy from the ailanthus trees, and the weeds poked up between the Belgian blocks. His visits to New York had been few, and purely of a business character, and as a pleasure resort his tastes had leaned rather Coney Islandwards.

After landing from the *Meridian* he had crossed the city, and walked down Fifth Avenue, fairly bristling with the unnoticed hostility of the rustic toward manners urban, and fully convinced that the people who had gazed at him in simple admiration of his hard, bronzed features and tall, powerful frame, were secretly commenting on his rural appearance.

Just for a moment, as he paused in contemplation of

the plate glass and massive brown-stone facings of Dr. Couteau's residence, his heart was near to failing him, and he pictured his humiliation if the doctor should fail to recognize him, or politely inquire the object of his call. Worse yet, the doctor might think that he was a patient, and, learning the truth after having lavished upon him his professional politeness, might, in his rage and disappointment, even descend to abuse. Amos smiled a little to himself, and reflected that if he did, it would certainly lead to some slight derangement of the office furniture. The idea of actual strife was rather reassuring. It was a frosty politeness, possibly not untinged with sarcasm, but disarming in its gentleness, that he dreaded. This was Amos's bad quarter-hour, for just as he had planted his large foot on the first step to begin the ascent, a team of glorious bays, drawing a glittering vehicle resplendent in shining enamel and maroon pointings, turned the corner, and Amos, ever a lover of fine horseflesh, paused to look at them, with the result that he fell over the next step. Recovering himself in confusion, and firmly convinced that his awkwardness had been observed from the house, he saw with dismay that the carriage was drawing up to the curb, and from its emptiness, and the look of expectancy on the footman's face, he guessed that it was the doctor's trap. The coachman was grinning at him, and for a moment he was half-minded to haul him off the box and beat him, but finally decided that it was the man's natural expression, as he studiously avoided Amos's keen and piercing eye.

Gathering himself together again, he once more began the ascent of the stoop, inwardly wishing that his

coat were less long in the tails, and fashioned more after the pattern of those worn by the men whom he had passed on the street, and whose raiment he had covertly observed. He wondered if the doctor was in a hurry, and decided that of course he was. Then doggedly, and with a not entirely inward curse, he viciously pushed the bell. At the very same moment the door opened, and Dr. Couteau emerged.

"Hello, doctor, so you did come to see me after all—and on my word still cussing!"

Amos felt the blood stealing up under the band of his black felt hat, but his native Yankee wit quickly came to the rescue.

"Yes, sir," he said; "but at myself this time; it's your turn now. This is your quarter-deck."

The absurdity of his position began to appeal to his keen sense of humor. For a young callow graduate like himself to repair to the elegant office of a great surgeon with the modest idea of offering that he be taken into partnership, and then to be found by the great man softly swearing on his doorstep, was a situation not provided for in any course that he had yet taken. He decided that he was an ass—a fool—an imbecile; that any chance of consideration that he might previously have been entitled to was gone, but that at least he would try to preserve his dignity.

Dr. Couteau looked at him in silence and without the vestige of a smile, but his deep-set eyes were twinkling. In that brief look he had read the young man through and through; understood his embarrassment and awkwardness—and liked him the better for it.

"Are you in any hurry?" he asked finally.

"No, sir," replied Amos. This was not strictly true. As a matter of fact, he was in a hurry—a great hurry to make his escape and get out of the range of those searching eyes. "But I expect that you are," he added hopefully.

"You're right; I'm in the very deuce of a hurry; but if you're not, it's all right." He waved him towards the brougham. "Jump in—I want to talk to you."

"I'm afraid I'm taking up too much of your time, and——"

"You are—as long as you stand here chinning on the doorstep. Jump in—jump in!"

Amos crawled meekly into the vehicle, crushing his hat as he did so. Dr. Couteau gave the coachman an address, stepped in after Amos, and slammed the door.

"As you aptly remarked, this is my quarter-deck," he said, and relapsed into silence.

They sped along for a way, neither speaking a word. Presently the surgeon pulled a cigar-case from his pocket.

"Smoke?"

"Not now, thank you," replied Amos, who was fervently wishing himself back aboard the schooner.

"Humph!" More silence.

Dr. Couteau sucked hungrily at his cigar, and Amos, glancing at him covertly, noticed, as he had when the surgeon came aboard the yacht in Boston, how the ash of the cigar lengthened visibly with every vigorous pull. In an incredibly short time it was consumed, and the stump tossed out into the street.

"I'm on my way uptown to operate," snapped the surgeon at length. "Going to do it at the patient's house. I meant to stop and get someone to help me, but now that I've got you it isn't necessary."

Amos's heart gave a few thumps so loud that he thought they must have been audible to the man beside him. The idea angered him, and did much to steady his nerves. The idea of the operation itself gave him no qualms—it was the thought of assisting this lightning operator, whose name had for so long symbolized the acme of surgical skill, and whose tempered individuality was little by little etching its impression into the more pliant one of the younger man.

Amos glanced out of the window carelessly to prevent his companion from reading the excitement which might be written on his features.

"Thank you," he answered, so calmly that the surgeon bent on him a keen and rather puzzled look. He had counted on a little tremulousness, and was at first slightly nettled, but Amos's continued interest in passing objects revealed in a measure the workings of his mind. The doctor shot another quick glance at him, and hauled out a fresh cigar.

"Pretty rapid, are you? You know, I like to work fast."

"I can tell you better when we get there," answered Amos, "I have never assisted at a major operation."

"Glad of it! Just so many less things for you to forget. Here we are."

Then entered the house, where Dr. Couteau presented Amos to the family as, "My assistant, Dr. Knapp." Thanks to an excellent medical course, Amos was perfectly familiar with the technique of the

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operating room, and all that he needed was the actual practice, and here his Yankee practicality stood him in good stead. Busied in his preparations, and later in the operation itself, he did not see how often the keen eye of the surgeon rested on his movements, but he was rather surprised at Dr. Couteau's lack of interference or criticism of anything that he did. As a matter of fact, the surgeon saw plenty to criticise, but on the whole he was pleased and surprised at the neophyte's adaptability—and especially at his entire self-possession and confidence.

During the operation, much to his disgust, Amos found his lack of digital dexterity far worse than he could possibly have anticipated. He seemed utterly unable to catch a vessel or even tie a knot, but to his wonder and amazement, the operator, instead of losing patience, would simply say, "Here, let me——" and with a beautifully co-ordinated movement of his fingers, so quick that Amos's eye was unable to follow it, would dispose of the affair.

The operation was soon finished, and with a few instructions to the two nurses they left the house. When they had driven a few blocks in silence, Dr. Couteau suddenly opened the conversation in his usual abrupt manner, sometimes a little startling to the unexpecting listener.

"Resigned your billet on the schooner yet?"

"No, sir."

"Want to take a heave or two of the lead before you drop your hook in a new berth, eh?"

"Yes, sir, to see if I've got cable enough to keep from getting blown up on the beach again. I'm sick of the beach. I've been on it all my life."

Something in his tone went straight to the soft heart that lay not so far beneath the rough husk.

The surgeon spat his cigar stump violently through the window.

"Do you think you *have* got scope enough?"

"It doesn't look that way——"

"Yes, it does. What do *you* know about it, anyway?" He turned to the younger man. "See here, Amos, you can't expect to step right from the medical school into a surgical practice, but with two years' hospital experience, you could be a very useful man to me. There are a lot of odds and ends of my work that I would like to turn over to an assistant. I've had two or three already, and swore that I'd never have another. Either they were damn fools, or else knew too much and wanted to give me private instructions about how to do my work. I think that you and I could get along, don't you?"

"I'd like nothing better than to try."

"Good. Now, I'll tell you what. There'll be a vacancy in the Puritan Hospital in a few days. The billet is by appointment, and what I say goes over there. Internes get their board and rooms, and they take good care of you. You take the course, and I'll give you an advance on the salary that you'll be worth to me when you get out—enough to buy you a few rags and a cigar or two. When you graduate, you come into my office, and we'll make a business arrangement. If you don't want to do that when the time comes, or get a better opening, you can pay me back at your convenience. Until you go into the hospital, come and visit me; there are fifteen rooms in my shack, and I inhabit about three."

Amos tried three times to speak, and made a worse mess of it than he had of tying small arteries. The surgeon hauled out a fresh cigar.

"Silence means consent," he remarked at last. He held out a sinewy hand.

"Shake," he said.

CHAPTER VII

OFF SOUNDINGS

BEYOND the fact that his ancestors had from early Colonial days been people of consequence and education, and stanch supporters of the Constitution, Amos knew but little. He had never, in fact, given the subject much thought, as the somewhat rough conditions of his own development had induced him to take rather less an interest in the past than in the present.

His father had fought through the four years of the Civil War, returning whole, with a fine record and the rank of major. When Amos and his twin brother Jordan were but two years of age, Major Knapp had made some ruinous speculations which cost him the whole of his comfortable estate, and had shortly afterwards died, leaving his widow destitute. She did not survive him long, and upon her death, Amos and Jordan had been given grudging shelter by a maternal uncle, who was possessed of a small heart and a large family.

Amos's father had been a graduate of Yale, as, indeed, had all of the male members of the family from the time when Governor Elihu Yale, who was an intimate of one of the early Knapps, had contributed to the halls of learning sundry books, with bales and boxes of East Indian goods, in grateful recognition of which

the institution had, in the year 1718, adopted the name of its benefactor.

As the twins grew older, their parsimonious uncle began to reap an ample reimbursement for the shelter which he had furnished and such food as was demanded for the maintenance of life, for it was not long before they were able to perform the labors of four farm hands. At sixteen, however, Jordan openly rebelled, upon which his uncle attempted to thrash him, and spent six weeks in bed as the result. This incident threw Jordan upon a cold but still pliant world. Not finding a fortune ready-made and fitted to his grasp, he started to hammer one out with a twenty-pound sledge in an iron construction company in Bridgeport.

Promotion came rapidly, for Jordan's talents were as vigorous as his muscles, and it was not long before he held a responsible position. For five or six years he flourished, earning a good salary, which he often urged Amos to draw upon. Finally, he was sent abroad upon the business of the company, and it was many years before Amos saw him again.

Dr. Couteau, besides being of excellent birth, was a thoroughly rounded man of the world, and when Amos came to him, he was quick to see that the quality in which the young man was most lacking was *savoir-faire.* The material was all there, as Amos, if democratic by association, was an aristocrat by descent; in powers of observation and adaptability he was by no means lacking, nor indeed was he cursed with modesty to any undue extent. In the meantime, in order that he might not become aggravatingly self-confident, he, Dr. Couteau, would occasionally bully him after the man-

ner of the tyranny exercised by a cross-grained old setter over a clumsy mastiff puppy.

Amos soon discovered that the advance on his future salary, which was to buy him "a few rags and a cigar or two," was in itself an independent income. At first he flatly declined to receive such a sum, whereupon his patron's rage was so alarming that for the first time in his life Amos was completely overawed.

"Won't take it, hey?" the surgeon finally exclaimed. "Why, what the devil kind of an assistant d'you suppose I want, anyway?—a raw-boned rail-splitter with the barnyard sticking to his boots and a coat that fits him like a sentry-box?—or a lantern-jawed 'longshoreman with his jeans seized up with a grommet? Damn it all,—I want a gentleman that looks the part. Now you just paddle off to my tailor and tell him to hang some rags on you in a way that 'll give you credit for what shape the Lord gave you and make you look less like a circuit-rider or an undertaker's clerk. You'll need all of that money and more to work to windward in this old town. I've proposed your name for membership at the Unity and Powhatan clubs; then of course you want to join the University. You won't get into the Unity for about twenty years, and all you need to get into the Powhatan is a shave, a shine, and some baggy trouserings. So run along, and don't stand here taking up my valuable time; it's worth four times the amount of that check you're kicking up such a fuss about."

Amos felt himself to be already so much in the surgeon's debt that a few dollars more or less did not appear to make much difference, so he reluctantly per-

mitted the older man to have his will. The chances are that he would have had it anyway, as Amos had met an individuality quite as strong as his own and much more mature. At any rate, a few days later the black broadcloth was discarded forever.

Amos had spent a week at Dr. Couteau's house, during which time he had made himself useful in assisting the surgeon in various ways, at operations, in the care of the instruments, and in making various physiological and pathological tests. One day his patron said to him:

"Amos, the house surgeon at the hospital has broken down in health and we are going to graduate him and let him go. That moves the whole staff of internes up a step, and the next man who comes on in January is just now abroad. Under the circumstances, you might as well go right in now, and as we are going to increase the staff this winter, you will get the appointment and therefore can stay there until you graduate. I rather expected something of this sort when you came to me."

That same day Amos entered the Puritan Hospital, where he was officially enrolled as junior interne. His duties and associations were congenial from the start, but in this first week of his service he had the only disagreement which occurred during his entire course. This was due to the presence of Edith Carter.

During odd moments of the day Amos would often pay the girl a little visit, and these calls did more to make her seclusion endurable than any diversion in the twenty-four hours of the long days of her imprisonment, for Ellsworth was still in Boston on business. The young house surgeon disapproved of these fre-

quent calls of his Junior, as, according to a time-honored custom, the care and entertainment of private patients had always been the prerogative of the internes of higher rank. Meeting Amos in the corridor as he was leaving Edith's room, the "House" asked him what he had been doing.

"Making a call," replied Amos briefly, not caring for the other's tone.

"It is not at all necessary for the Junior to make rounds on the private patients," said the House.

"My calls have not been professional," answered Amos; "I go in to see Miss Carter socially. She happens to be a friend of mine."

"Have you done all of your dressings?"

"Yes."

"Finished your work in the laboratory?"

"Yes."

"Made that blood count on the woman in 'O'?"

"Yes, and written it up on the chart."

The House hesitated for a moment. "Well, then, you can go out for the rest of the morning if you like."

"Thanks" (dryly). "Is Miss Carter allowed to see visitors?"

"Yes, of course," replied the House a bit uneasily.

Amos turned on his heel and walked back into her room again.

That afternoon the House reported the incident to Dr. Couteau.

"It's not good discipline, Doctor," he concluded; "what can I do in a case like that?"

Dr. Couteau pondered for a moment, and the House grew hopeful.

"Why don't you take him by the scruff of the neck and chuck him out?" asked the surgeon.

"Why, I don't like to use violence, Doctor," replied the scandalized House, who measured at least thirty-two inches around the chest.

"It's the only thing I can suggest," replied Dr. Couteau gruffly, and proceeded to the wards.

Edith Carter was at length discharged from the hospital, the treatment of the fracture having achieved, as pronounced by Dr. Couteau, a perfect result. After she had gone Amos was surprised at the void which her absence caused in his existence, but the slack was soon taken up in the stress of work, for the hot season was upon them and the ambulance service doubled in bringing in the victims thereof. This, in addition to the usual work in the wards and operating-room, did not leave much time for moping, even had he been inclined to permit himself such an indulgence. His recreation, which was limited, was usually confined to an evening with Dr. Couteau spent above the heated stratum on a roof-garden or a run down to one of the beaches.

When at length the autumn came and the social season commenced, Dr. Couteau pronounced Amos's first acquisitions of raiment insufficient and there was more ordering and fitting. Probably Dr. Couteau gave the tailor private instructions of his own this time, for the assorted wardrobe of which Amos soon found himself in possession was considerably in excess of his own ideas of the necessities. When the things arrived, he locked his door and tried them on successively. Certainly the tailor was an artist, for he had seen at a glance the cut which would bring out to the greatest

advantage the broad shoulders, deep chest, small waist, and narrow hips, without producing an ultra effect out of keeping with the deep-lined, serious features.

Late in the afternoon, Amos walked down Fifth Avenue in his new regalia. As he strolled along with a swarthy flush on either high cheek-bone and a firm erect carriage, which was partly the result of the knowledge of his faultless attire, more than one passer-by turned to look at him, but this time the scrutiny was not one of amusement.

In front of the Cathedral he met Dr. Couteau, who was for the instant taken so unawares at the transformation of his embryo assistant, that he so far forgot himself as to let a momentary gleam of admiration shine from his deep-set eyes. However, he recovered himself immediately.

"Humph,—look now more like the advance agent of a show than a struggling practitioner. Never mind. Better to over-do than under-do in this burgh. Got your full outfit of evening clothes?"

"I should say I had. Why, that——"

"All right. Got a dinner invitation for you. Friday night at the Sandringham-Smythes. You've got to get house-broken, and that's a good place to take the first lessons. A gang of parvenues; money sticking out all over until you can't rest. Give you about twenty forks, then take half of them away again. That's all right, only they ought to keep on and take away the other half and bring a trough. I had them to dinner not long ago, and just for fun had my man Peter lay out a cartilage knife by every plate for the entrée. Well, sir, the next dinner they gave, they had the nearest thing that they could get to those cartilage-

knives for the entrée. Morris, the laparotomy man, was there, and he almost had a fit. Looked to see them serve an autopsy knife with the canvas-back."

Amos went to the dinner, and to his intense amazement, thoroughly enjoyed himself. As he was stripping for the descent to the drawing room with much the same sensation about the solar plexus that he had once experienced when about to don a diving-armor and be lowered to inspect a vessel's keel, a shining lackey left upon him a dainty billet. Amos turned the microscopic envelope in his hand with some surprise, at the same time wondering how the sleuth-like footman had discovered his identity. A sudden inspiration suggesting that he might find a clew within, he opened it, and his heart gave a quick throb on finding a tiny card bearing the inscription "Miss Carter."

Amos was sorely perplexed. He did not know that Edith was to be there; did not even know that she was in town, and even supposing that she was below, what could be her motive in sending him the card? He was half tempted to question the footman, but reflecting that the mystery might clear if allowed to simmer undisturbed, he decided to allow events to take their course. He wondered if Dr. Couteau had arrived, and by a stealthy inspection of the top-hats discovered that the surgeon had already engaged the enemy.

Having no longer any fitting reason for delay, Amos sucked in his breath and took the plunge, finding some relief in the reflection that whatever else might occur, his stature precluded any danger of his slipping in unobserved. A pompous footman at the door turned upon him forbiddingly.

"Name, sir," he demanded.

"Dr. Knapp," replied Amos harshly, not liking the man's tone, which seemed to imply that he might be an impostor.

"Doc-tor *Knapp!*" blatantly announced the flunkey. Amos had never before realized what a plain name he possessed.

"Oh, dry up!" he growled inaudibly; but his wrath was swept away in the onslaught of the hostess, who bubbled over him in a manner only in excess of that worn when he had previously been taken to call by Dr. Couteau.

As his name was being lightly tossed around the room, Amos suddenly caught sight of Edith, who was sitting near the fireplace talking with Dr. Couteau as he stood at the arm of her chair. The hostess having swept away, Amos crossed the room with the somewhat awkward step of a big man until he has learned to take pride in his size. As he drew near, Edith looked up with the swift smile that never failed to set his heart pounding, and held out her hand. Dr. Couteau threw him a quick, searching glance, and finding him correct at every point, nodded pleasantly.

"If I had known that I was to have this pleasure, Miss Carter," said Amos in his deep voice, "I would have come an hour earlier and sat on the doorstep to wait." He looked reproachfully at the surgeon, at the same time wishing that he would move on, so that Edith might explain the mystery of the card.

"I had the advantage," replied the girl brightly. "Now if you will lean down so that Dr. Couteau can't hear, I will tell you something. I was going to decline, until I learned that you were coming."

Before Amos could reply, dinner was announced, and Edith, rising gracefully, rested her little hand upon his arm. At this, the significance of the card suddenly dawned upon Amos's mind and he mentally cursed himself for a thick-headed lump. The knowledge of his narrow escape from betraying his social ignorance slightly listed Amos's poise for the instant, but Edith with an almost imperceptible deliberation blocked his precipitate stampede for the dining room, and a minute later they were seated with due decorum.

Amos's inward strife, though giving no outward sign, was quite evident to Edith. In a similar case she would have gone at once to the rescue with the infinite tact of the finished product that she was. There was, however, a contra-element. Edith Carter was a woman in whom much of the primitive persisted. She loved to watch a good fight bravely fought; just then, she reveled in the struggle between pride and social ignorance that was being fought out beside her. She knew that this great, fierce-faced stranger was going ahead, puzzled at every turn, but with the calm persistence of an explorer in a strange jungle. To his mind, the enormity of the slightest *faux pas* was as if seen through a strong lens, yet he made his mistakes, was conscious of the result, and suffered accordingly and with perfect poise, not allowing an incident to alter a syllable or modify a thought of his conversation.

Determined to make him fight it out himself, she did not help him—at least not intentionally. To be sure, she had opened the conversation, but purposefully, to plunge him deeper in the toils, with an inner conviction that the power of the big mind which controlled the big body would arise and free itself of constraint.

Referring to an exquisite Diaz which was opposite them, she asked Amos if it pleased him.

"It is beautiful," replied Amos, a little annoyed, for he wanted to talk of other things, principally Edith, "but it is badly hung."

She studied it critically for a moment.

"Why do you say that? Surely nothing could be better than that paneled background of Flemish oak, and the frame is perfect."

"Do you observe," said Amos, "that it is in what would be in the daytime the darkest corner of the room?"

"Yes," she admitted, "but the room itself is dark and usually lighted artificially, I should say."

"Precisely," replied Amos, calmly helping himself to an inedible decoration from an elaborate entrée. "But don't you see how the yellow of the artificial light absorbs the most salient features of the painting? I noticed in the other room a sort of picnic party painted by some Frenchman, I forget his name, but it was a green sort of a thing and it hung where in the daytime it must get a cold light from the court and in the evening a green light from that big lamp. They ought to shift them around."

Edith thought of the Corot in the drawing room, turned the criticism in her mind, and started anew. This time it was with the attempt to make him talk about himself, to avoid which he soon grew anecdotal, and his deep voice, without being at all loud, undertoned the chatter around the table, until, without his realizing it, several of the others were listening to his story. Before the end of the dinner everyone had asked who and what he was, and the fact that so little

information was forthcoming roused an even keener interest.

After the ladies had left they could still hear the deep, resonant tones intermingled with roars of laughter from the men. Over the coffee and cognac Amos had a somewhat broader scope, and the reluctance with which the men finally left the dining room was sufficient evidence of this big stranger's powers as a story-teller.

Amos left the house at half-past eleven, and as he walked uptown to the hospital there was a springiness in his long stride that comes with a young man's first success in a broad new field.

One invitation leads to another, and before the season was far advanced Amos had all that he could do to keep up his social engagements and yet not neglect his work. He considered it a part of his obligation to Dr. Couteau to go out as much as possible, as he was quick to appreciate the fact that the more people he knew, the greater would be his usefulness to the surgeon, to say nothing of the independent practice to which such an acquaintance might in time lead.

Very often he met Edith and Ellsworth, for the latter was now living in New York, and not infrequently he met the Whites. Mr. White never called him anything but "Captain," and would sometimes ask him slyly whether he would rather talk to this or that pretty girl or the sailors on the *Meridian*. Before long, many people knew of Amos's personal history and respected him all the more for the hard apprenticeship which he had served and which, instead of blunting the keen edge of his finer qualities, appeared to have tempered it.

Ellsworth, who really liked Amos, watched his progress with a pleasure not unmixed with surprise. He had never considered Amos in the rôle of carpet-knight, yet here he was, ruffling it with the best, albeit usually with a semi-apparent humor at his occupation which developed as he grew more accustomed to the new atmosphere.

Only a few, among whom were Dr. Couteau and Major Carter, noticed that whenever Edith Carter and Amos Knapp met at any entertainment it was not long before they seemed to drift together. Ellsworth himself had once or twice observed it, and was on the whole rather glad, for Amos had never occurred to him in the light of a possible rival, and when he was with Edith there was little opportunity for the blandishments of others far more dangerous.

Edith and Amos were not themselves conscious of any apparent effort to be together. Indeed, there was no effort. It was simply that when at a tea, reception, or musical they happened to meet, they usually remained together. Of course, if Amos felt that he was intruding or had other obligations to fulfill, they might simply exchange greetings, but thereafter his movements became automatic.

Major Carter and Ellsworth were great friends, despite the fact that the major regarded his prospective son-in-law as a pure-blooded Yankee of the most virulent New England type. This accident of birth he regarded, however, as a misfortune rather than a fault, and consequently gave Ellsworth all the more credit for the noble efforts which he made to live it down. It was a touching sight to see the old South Carolina fire-eater and the young Bostonian sitting opposite

cous howl from one of the big carnivora turned the scale in Amos's favor.

"All right, but only for half an hour. Where were you going when you overtook me?"

"Just for a walk; in here, I suppose. I come here quite often. I like to watch the animals and I like to watch the people watching the animals. One day last fall I personally conducted a young lady's Sunday-school class through the whole place." He laughed retrospectively.

"How did that happen?" asked Edith curiously.

"I was sitting on one of the benches trying to sketch that supercilious camel, when a swarm of little boys came along and began to tease the bison. Then they began doing dares in front of the big elk's cage, and pretty soon one of them climbed up on the fence. I went over to haul him down, as the elks are rather peevish and I was afraid that the kid might be foolish enough to climb down into the pen. None of the keepers happened to be around, and the boys had gotten the old beast so fighting mad that when I walked up, he made a lunge at me through the wire netting. The wire held, but the jar slung the little scoundrel clean off his perch and he landed with a thump not six feet from the stag. In another minute that kid would have looked like a colander, but I managed to get my arms through the wire and grab the elk by both horns. I couldn't have held him, but the first lunge that he made at me fouled one of his tines in the meshes of the fence, and I managed to hang on until the kid got up and climbed out. Just then a pretty girl with the rest of the school in tow came up, and as soon as she could get her breath, began to thank me and then to

cry. She told me that the swarm of little devils was her Sunday-school class, and that she had brought them over from a place in New Jersey to spend the day in the Park. The poor girl had no idea of the contract she'd let herself into until she got across the ferry, and from that time on they'd been delaying traffic and demoralizing all of our civic institutions, until she said that she was beginning to feel her hair grow gray. We had a very nice talk, and then I undertook to let her have a breathing spell while I gave an illustrated lecture on natural history. Partly by bribery and partly by abuse I kept the small fry alongside, and finally, when I had to go, that poor girl was so grateful that she was almost ready to fall on my neck. I asked her to drop me a line to let me know how she got home, and whether there were any casualties, and she said that perhaps she would,—but she never did," he added sadly.

"Was she very pretty?" asked Edith. The little anecdote had left a picture in her mind that pleased her.

"Yes," replied Amos,—"she was a very pretty girl now that I come to think of it,—but I wasn't noticing her looks so much just then. She was a very sensible sort of a girl too, and I believe she belongs to one of the best families out in Plain Meadow. I asked a friend of mine who lives there if he knew her, and he laughed and said, Yes, indeed; that he had once been engaged to her, and that just now she was engaged to his cousin!"

Edith's eyes opened wide. "It's not Marjorie Loring?"

"Yes,—that's her name. Do you know her?"

"No,—I've never met Miss Loring, but I know the man she's engaged to,—he's—he's very nice." She was about to say, "he's a friend of Douglas," but for some reason which she did not stop to analyze, she felt just at that moment disinclined to mention his name. If she *had* analyzed the motive, the chances are that in her self-anger she would have thereafter persistently kept the conversation on her fiancé, as a sort of penance for what she might have regarded as her disloyalty. She had often observed that the effect of Ellsworth's presence, or the mention of his name before Amos, was to promptly kill all of his spontaneity; —why, she had never quite decided, but rather ascribed it to diffidence.

They reached the bear cage, but "Ursus Horribilis" was sleeping peacefully, and "Ursus Mittendorfi" refused to disturb his slumbers, so they soon left.

Possibly the big elk recognized his former antagonist, for he snorted defiantly as they passed his cage. The sight of him caused Amos to philosophize.

"It seems to me that if I were engaged to a girl like that little Sunday-school teacher, I'd go along with her when she took out her class, and see that she didn't get into trouble!" he said reflectively.

Edith smiled. "How many men would do that, do you suppose?"

"Why, any man that was really in love with a girl," replied Amos, surprised.

Edith was silent for a moment. She was reviewing in her mind the countless little favors of the sort which she had asked of Douglas from time to time,—little things she wanted him to do with her, and which would not have taken two hours of his time. For the

first time in her life she found herself comparing the qualities of the two men, Amos and Ellsworth, while Amos rambled along about his Sunday-school teacher.

"I wonder why she broke her first engagement," he questioned finally.

"I fancy they simply discovered that they were not as much in love with each other as they had imagined," answered Edith. "There was no disagreement, I have heard,—and they are still very good friends. I suppose now that you have discovered that she is engaged, your interest in her will wane?"

"No," replied Amos slowly; "that is, her second engagement would make no difference. It would be her breaking of the first that would lower her in my opinion,—or rather, perhaps, the idea of her becoming engaged to marry a man for whom she was so little sure of her affection. Then there is something so cold-blooded about breaking an engagement and remaining good pals afterwards. It would show so much more character if they would only hate each other like the—very much!"

Edith was amused at his awkward ending, but something in the tone of his voice had made her heart beat faster. They were going toward the Fifth Avenue gate, and the walk was almost deserted.

"I think you are too radical," she said rather breathlessly. "A young girl has no means of discriminating between love and simple attraction. The most trying epoch of a woman's life is when she first comes out and receives the attentions of older and often fascinating men. She has never been in love,—and in most cases she is waiting to be, and wondering, before every dance she goes to, if perhaps her fate may not

be waiting for her there. If she is sensible enough to believe that there is no such thing as love at first sight, she is in an even worse uncertainty of mind. If in the fear of losing her life's happiness, she is over-quick in promising herself, there is certainly no reason why she should be obliged to sacrifice herself,—and the man, if later she discovers that she was mistaken. Nor do I see any reason why they should not remain friends. I think that we ought to cut that word 'hate' out of our vocabulary. It's primitive, unenlightened, and un-Christian to hate. If you were in love with a girl, and for some reason couldn't have her, wouldn't you prefer being good friends to hating one another?"

Amos felt the hot blood surge up into his face. He looked off across the common to where the sheep were grazing. She wondered why he did not answer, and glanced at him in surprise.

He turned then and looked at her squarely. "If I were in love with a girl, and she loved someone else, I should wish to be her dearest friend as long as I could keep my secret from her. If she ever found it out,—for certainty,—our friendship would have reached its honest limits, and would have to end, for her knowledge would make a point in common to which we would have no right. If she had ever loved me,—as I might have loved her,—or made me think that she loved me, and then discovered that it was all a mistake, do you think that we could ever again be friends,—just *friends?*—not much! I would want her to hate me with a hate that would make a black shadow in the darkest corner of *hell!*—I beg your pardon,—I didn't intend to be quite so emphatic."

Nevertheless his face was quite pale, and the girl,

darting a half-frightened, half-thrilled glance at him, could see the great chest rising and falling.

They said but little for the rest of their walk, and when they reached the gate he called her a hansom.

When he raised his hat, and turned to go back to the hospital, she noticed that the usual color had not yet returned to his somewhat swarthy face.

CHAPTER IX

A DEVIATION

MAJOR CARTER had married into one of the old Manhattan families, and his city residence, the old Van der Wort house on Gramercy Park, was a part of the large fortune to which Edith Carter was the sole inheritor. Her mother, who had been the beautiful Katrina Van der Wort, had died the year after the birth of her daughter.

The visitors at the Van der Wort house were comparatively few. The most frequent guest, excepting Ellsworth of course, was Dr. Couteau, who came in at least two evenings in the week for the sake of a little visit with Edith, to whom he was especially devoted, and a quarrelsome game of chess with the major. Amos called with a certain regularity, but not often, as it is not pleasant when a man is secretly and hopelessly in love with a girl to feel that he is keeping her from a tête-à-tête with her betrothed.

One evening when Edith happened to be alone, Dr. Couteau was announced. The drawing room was dimly lit, and Edith's gown, being of a soft chiffon, failed to give that subtle note of warning that usually precedes a woman's entrance. Her step also was so muffled in the deep rug that she reached the doorway unseen by her guest. With one foot on the threshold she paused with an odd, shy sense of intrusion.

Dr. Couteau was standing before the mantel, over which there hung a magnificent portrait of Edith's mother. The surgeon was in abstract contemplation of the sweet face looking down upon him from the shadowy wall, and although his head was slightly turned from Edith, there was something in the droop of the trim shoulders and the hang of the fierce old head that suggested the pose of the devotee; such an attitude as might have been taken by an old soldier while gazing at the face of a dead sovereign whom he had loved and lived for in vain. It was the bodily expression of a wistful contemplation, so foreign to her cherished knowledge of his traits, that she felt as one unwillingly watching a secret orison.

The heel of her slipper clicked on the rim of the parquet floor, and with a little start the surgeon turned and saw her. She noticed that his face was quite pale, and as his eyes first fell on her they seemed filled with a fathomless tenderness. The next instant the look had vanished, leaving only the kindly, half-humorous twinkle that his eyes wore always for her.

"My word!" he exclaimed; "I took you for a ghost. May I never be haunted by a less charming one."

"And may you never be haunted by one who enjoys the occupation less," she answered brightly, giving him both hands.

"Ah, my dear," he answered, "there is such a thing as being dreadfully haunted by those we have loved, but such visitations are sweet far beyond their sadness —and what fools am I to thank for finding you alone?" he went on lightly, as one anxious to change the key.

"My foolish self, I am afraid," she replied regretfully. "The weather and all has got on my nerves until I'm not a nice companion—so you find me thus desolate." The loose, filmy sleeves blew back over her graceful arms as she threw them out, palms upward, in a quick gesture replete with wistful deprecation.

"Then vive la weather and all—especially the *all,* which I take to be the madding throng, of whom we all come some day to sicken."

Edith glanced at the tall clock by the stairs.

"It is only nine,—we are not yet out of danger,—let us ambush ourselves in the fernery and growl and show our teeth if anyone tries to make us break cover."

She turned and led the way to the rear of the house, looking back at him over one rounded shoulder, which for an instant glowed rosy-hued from the reflection of a tall piano lamp beneath which she passed. Dr. Couteau followed her to a miniature fairyland overhanging an old garden in the rear of the ancient house.

Edith sank back upon a divan in the corner, motioning her guest to a wicker chair opposite.

"Now let us talk about *you.* Don't let us talk about me at all; I've had so much of my own society to-day that I am bored to death with it. How many people have you sent to their last reckoning this week?" She dropped her head back against a cushion and looked at him slantingly with a most impudent expression of nose and wide, quizzical mouth and half-closed, teasing eyes.

"Not half as many as *you've* sent about their business, I'll wager. I only wish I was a cardiac specialist instead of a surgeon; I might consider allowing you a

commission on the total number of hearts knocked out that came my way for consultation. Last night a chap got up in the Academy of Medicine and read a paper on 'The Increasing Prevalence of Functional Cardiac Disorders among Young Adult Males in the City of New York.' He laid it to cigarettes, but *I* lay it to full-length portraits in palm-green frames with a chiffon mat!"

Edith threw back her head and laughed up at the orchids which were hanging tendril-like about her hair.

"How is Dr. Knapp getting along?" she asked presently, seeing that her jokes were inclined to come home to roost.

"With great force. They think a great deal of him at the hospital, and his social policy is somewhat similar to his methods of straightening out the crew on the *Meridian* as described by White. No one can ever over-estimate the value of a bovine voice. When a man's most casual remark drowns the sparkling epigrams of everyone in his vicinity, one is rather apt to hear from him—that reminds me, I have secured a dinner invitation for him for next week at the Braces'. Do you know them?"

Edith sighed deeply. "Slightly. They are old friends of papa's, and Douglas and I are asked to this dinner you speak of. Douglas wants to go." She sighed again.

"Can hardly wait, can you?" remarked the surgeon sarcastically.

"Oh, but really, Dr. Couteau, they are the most *awful* people! Gertrude King dined there not long ago, and she said that it reminded her of a college athletic event, except that the yelling was individual in-

stead of in chorus and the person who yelled the loudest scored the highest."

The surgeon nodded. "That's the reason I got Amos," he remarked. "He'll be sort of a soft pedal. Yes, they are a lot of barbarians, Edie—the kind that bribe their guests to good nature by coyly dropping a hundred-dollar gimcrack beside each plate, a good deal as you tip a Coney Island waiter in advance, and then when the gorge is over, the host tries to get square by lugging out his roulette wheel and turning his drawing room into a gambling den. The only difference is that in a gambling house you can limit your losses, whereas in one of these private games the first thing that you know they'll have you running the wheel, when you stand to lose any amount according to what some little whippersnapper with more money than brains may choose to chuck on the table."

Edith nodded. "Yes," she said, "and another disagreeable feature is that one's good fortune is at the cost of one's friends. Inviting a person to your house and then making it cost them a good round sum in cash is not consistent with *my* ideas of hospitality. If the host wins he must feel rather mean."

"And if he loses he probably wishes to Heaven he'd never given the party. I've seen a good deal of this society gambling, Edie, and I've finally reached a point where if I take a hand in a game of chance, whether it's poker, baccarat, roulette, or anything else in which money is to change hands, I just eliminate the social part of it from my mind from the very start. Friendship and gambling are just about as compatible as sulphuric acid and water, and no man is my friend while he is sitting opposite me in a game of chance. He may

be before and after, but for the time being he is a financial enemy. I hate the whole idea and always have, but if the rest can stand it I can."

A new current monthly magazine happened to be lying on the divan where Dr. Couteau was sitting, and as he talked he picked it up idly and ran the leaves through his fingers. The pages fell apart at a certain place, and glancing down he saw the title of a story, beneath which, in rather conspicuous type, was printed, "By Douglas Brooks Ellsworth."

Edith, who had been reading the story, watched the surgeon curiously, and her quick eye did not fail to catch the almost impalpable hardening about Dr. Couteau's mouth as he tossed the magazine aside.

"There is one of Douglas's stories in this number," she remarked carelessly, resting her head against the cushion and watching the surgeon through lashes that almost completely hid her eyes.

"I see there is;—by the way, have you heard 'Tristan'——"

"I am going to-morrow night." She paused and then went on more slowly and with more than usual of the soft accent and inflection peculiar to the women of the South.

"Have you read any of Douglas's stories lately?—They are wonderfully clever."

"No—I seldom read fiction. It takes about all of my spare time to keep abreast of professional progress. Have you made up your party yet for my dinner and theater spree?"

"Almost—but there are one or two uncertainties." The soft voice drawled even more softly. "What do you think of Douglas's choice of literature as a profes-

sion, Doctor?—You know his uncle made him rather a good offer if he would take a course of law. Don't you think that the success that he has made in writing so far, justifies him in taking it up as his life's work?"

"Oh, yes,—better to be a good writer than a poor lawyer, I suppose——"

"But what makes you think that he would be a poor lawyer?—he has always done well everything that he has undertaken."

The soft voice had risen a note or two and the drawl was suddenly dropped, something as a fencer throws aside his cloak and low-brimmed hat when about to engage.

The keen eyes of the surgeon launched a wary look from under the overhanging eyebrows. His voice grew more decisive than the girl had ever heard it when addressed directly to her.

"Because he would be trying all the time to mix the two things—and business and the pursuit of the Muses are not compatible at one and the same time. He would be thinking of the romantic rather than the legal aspect of the case, and could hardly wait to end the trial in his hurry to get home and write a story about it. No!—he'd better stick to literature! By the way, where is your father this evening, Edie?"

Edith leaned suddenly forward, and as the long lashes swept upward the surgeon saw an expression in the slaty eyes that almost startled him.

It was such a cold flame as might have blazed in the eyes of a woman of the neolithic age, as clad in a scrap of aurochs hide and grasping a long-handled, stone-lashed mace, she had planted her feet across the

body of her prostrate mate and screamed defiance at his foes.

"Dr. Couteau," she said in a tone of ominous quiet, "I have purposely mentioned Douglas three times, and each time you have promptly changed the conversation. You do not like him—do you?"

"No, Edie—I don't!"

"Why not?"

"Because I think him utterly selfish—also because I am so fond of you."

The last words brought no softening to the rigidity of the girl's face.

"Do you think him more selfish than most men?"

"No,—but 'most men' is not a sufficiently high standard. Don't you see, my dear, that it is all on your account. I wouldn't object to Ellsworth if it weren't for you."

Her look relaxed, and from fierceness changed with a suddenness almost pathetic to an imploring anxiety.

"Would you trust him?" she asked bluntly, as one suggesting a treason which it shames the lips to express.

Dr. Couteau took one little hand in his and patted it gently.

"*You* do not, my dear child, or you would never have asked me such a question. I should trust Ellsworth just so far as he would trust himself—and if you asked him point blank I think he would be man enough to tell you that that was not a great way. My advice to you, Edie, is not to send Douglas away—keep him,—but don't marry him until you are *sure*. You are very far from being sure now,—wait a while and see how he stands that hardest of all tests—success!—Why, bless

my soul, if there isn't that long-legged protégé of mine haranguing Porter in the hall."

Edith listened, and as she did so Amos's deep voice came vibrating through the long, high-ceilinged rooms.

"I'm off!" said the surgeon, jumping to his feet. "Old dogs don't like to be pestered by pups. Good-night, Edie."

Edith wished him good-evening, too preoccupied with her own thoughts to notice the wistful look in the keenly rugged face as he bowed over her hand with an old-time courtliness.

She heard what appeared to be an interchange of growls between the two men as they met in the hall, and a few minutes later Amos was announced.

As she arose to meet him at the entrance to the fernery he was startled at the pale, almost tragic beauty of her face. For a few minutes they discussed trivialities; then she asked abruptly:

"Dr. Knapp—do you like Douglas?"

"Of course I do!" replied Amos stanchly. "Douglas is one of the finest chaps I know. Why?"

"Because, Dr. Couteau has been calling him names and talking horridly about him."

Amos smiled.

"He's jealous,—formerly he was the main rigging. Now when he comes around you sic the major at him,—naturally enough he's sore!"

Edith laughed, but not with entire relief.

"You are a friend of Douglas's, Dr. Knapp, but—do—you—*trust* him?"

For an instant Amos regarded her with an astonishment too deep for words; then turned to her almost angrily.

"Pardon me,—but if that is a joke it is in very bad taste; if you mean it you ought to be ashamed of yourself!"

A tightening of the heart muscle sucked the blood from Edith's face, but a gleam of anger flashed from her eyes.

"Thank you. No doubt you are right, but *do* you?"

Amos felt his soul give an agonized squirm, but he did not hesitate.

"Trust him? Of course I do!" He lied.

The blood rushed back to Edith's face, left it again, then her eyes suddenly filled.

"Oh, thank you!—thank you!" she answered softly.

CHAPTER X

AMOS IS CAUGHT ABACK

DR. COUTEAU and Amos were on their way uptown to the residence of Mrs. J. Morton Brace. Amos had been rather loath to leave the hospital, having many duties which he disliked throwing on his fellow internes, but Dr. Couteau had made quite a point of his presence that evening, being rather curious to see how his protégé would acquit himself at an event of the character of which he knew the dinner would be.

As they whirled up Fifth Avenue, Amos as usual was regarding the passing pageant with quiet interest while Dr. Couteau sucked vigorously at a black Havana, occasionally pointing out to Amos some person familiar by repute, and giving a brief comment on his or her character—or lack of it.

"About these people where we are going to dine tonight," he remarked presently: "they fill a certain place in society; also people of their type are usually excellent patients. Don't misunderstand me, Amos. It is not good form to discuss your hosts before or after taking, but an invitation of this sort is a good deal of a business proposition. There is no element of obligation whatever. I've got something which they want; position. They've got something which I want: diversion. We exchange. I help their dinner out; they

help me to while away the early part of the evening. That's society,—this sort."

"What's the matter with them?" asked Amos somewhat idly.

"A lack of equilibrium between money and breeding. The father of the family, who comes of a solid if not especially aristocratic New England stock, is really the only social possibility as far as birth is concerned. He was once associated with Major Carter in a Southern land-improvement enterprise, and Edith tells me that he has been frequently entertained at their house in Spartanville. Owing to certain provincial habits of dress and speech, this gentleman's share in his wife's and daughter's social functions is usually limited to the cashier's department."

Amos meditated upon this digest in silence, and shortly they drew up at the Braces' residence. Still having in mind the surgeon's synopsis he was rather surprised at the air of quiet, well-bred conventionality and decorous atmosphere of the assemblage. Although shrewd and a close observer, Amos could hardly have been expected to appreciate until later, when the wine had made them a little careless, the masterly acting that was going on about him; acting, by the way, which should have been of an exalted grade, inasmuch as it had been zealously and elaborately studied in the most expensive schools and under the direction of the most exclusive masters. If Amos could only have appreciated it he would have enjoyed the prettiest little game of make-believe that he had witnessed since his childhood, when with the six-year-old daughter of a sea-captain and a half-dozen or so corn-cob babies,

he had gone into light house-keeping in a disused corner of a boathouse. Dr. Couteau saw it, and grinned; Ellsworth saw it, and smiled. A smile at thirty is apt to become a grin at sixty.

The dinner was yelled through in the usual manner of such banquets, and after the men had finished their cigars, roulette was tentatively mentioned by the hostess. Ideas by this time being pretty generally exhausted by those who were willing to take the trouble to set them forth, the proposal was received with clamorous enthusiasm by some and silence by others. The former being more audible, the party adjourned to a card-room, where a complete roulette outfit had been set up. By unanimous vote Dr. Couteau was elected croupier, each man being expected to officiate in turn for half an hour in that capacity.

Amos, on seeing these elaborate preparations, was somewhat dismayed, the more so as on happening to look up he caught a negative shake of the head from Dr. Couteau. Without further hesitation he asked to be excused, urging as a pretext his ignorance of the game. This, however, provoked a general exclamation of dissent.

"If Dr. Knapp has never played we had better not urge him," said Edith. "You know the old saying about 'beginners' luck.'" She had seen deeper than the others, and thought she understood Amos's position. "Come over and talk to me, Dr. Knapp—I'm not going to play either."

"Indeed, you shall not interfere with the doctor's education in any such way as that!" exclaimed the hostess. Amos's personal magnetism had interested her during dinner, and she did not propose to have this

new and unusual individual stolen by another woman. She stepped over to where he was standing.

"If you don't know the game, Doctor, it's high time to learn. I am going to coach you myself, and you shall fleece them all. A man who doesn't know roulette has about as much fun in society as a pretty widow at a blindman's ball!"

Dr. Couteau gave the gaudy little disk an impatient whirl, and with a quick twist sent the ball spinning in the opposite direction.

"Gentlemen, make your game!" he rasped sharply.

There was a general scramble to place bets, and in the confusion Amos's instructress secured from him a bill, and cashed it for twenty one-dollar chips. Glancing over the bent heads of the players, Amos caught Edith's eye, and was rather puzzled to account for her odd expression of resentment. After his first warning glance Dr. Couteau had ignored him entirely, and appeared thoroughly absorbed in his occupation as croupier.

As the game proceeded, Amos began to be conscious of a subtle change of psychic atmosphere. The noisy hilarity in the beginning was giving way to a quiet, subdued excitement, not without a certain hint of a watchfulness of personal interest unnecessary among friends and gentlefolk. Bets had been gradually raised; the men either joked noisily or were silent. From one of them Amos caught a low rough aspirate that had no place in a drawing room, and the faces of some of the women were not pleasant to study.

Dr. Couteau and Ellsworth were the only ones who seemed absolutely unaffected by the high tension. The surgeon, rough and curt as he had been from the

first, droned his rigmarole, sweeping in or doling out with equal taciturnity; Ellsworth, although winning steadily, seemed less interested in the result of the game than in his furtive study of the faces around the table. Amos, who was winning in small amounts, was lost in the interest of the system, his tutoress giving delighted little screams, and squeezing his arm excitedly with every lucky turn.

Higher the bets ran, and tenser grew the sordid interest. Amos, by a lucky coup, had doubled his capital, and invested it all in chips. Dr. Couteau had given up his position as croupier, and was placing gentlemanly little bets, entirely disproportionate to the amounts he stood to lose while running the bank. One of the men, a heavy loser, was very pale, and making frantic efforts at jocosity; Ellsworth was back again to about where he had started, and soon went in to relieve the banker. To the boisterous delight and pride of the hostess, Amos had run over two hundred dollars ahead of the game; small comparatively, but due to the lightness of his play.

Soon Ellsworth left the bank, having won heavily. In the excitement of his winnings, Amos had forgotten the obligation of taking his turn as croupier, and received, therefore, a most disagreeable sinking of the diaphragm when suddenly called upon to officiate. He had quickly learned the principles of the game, but his capital was sadly inadequate to meet a contrary run of luck.

The first spin threw the zero, but two of the players had covered it, so the gain to the bank was a minus quantity. Following, one of the ladies who was playing high on the third column, which she untruthfully

claimed to contain her age, paid the penalty of untruth in heavy financial loss, the greater part of which went to Ellsworth, who was playing the *rouge, première douzaine,* and *impair* as the result of statistics carefully taken during the evening. Another man was playing an expensive theoretical system, which would work on any wheel but the one in use. Altogether, the slack of the loss was pretty well taken up by the gain around the table, so that Amos was still ahead, until his last spin as croupier, which was to finish the play for the evening. Then suddenly the lady who had been playing the third column was assailed with superstitious fears.

"I'm tired of lying!" she exclaimed petulantly. "Here goes twenty dollars on my *actual* age!"

Everyone laughed, and the mirth grew louder as she threw a blue counter angrily on thirty-six. One would have guessed her age at far less. The ladies looked puzzled, and Ellsworth showed his even, white teeth in a smile of sardonic pleasure. *This* was the element of the game that interested him.

The chances of the play were thirty-seven to one against success; nevertheless there was an element about the hazard which took the mind of the players away from their own bets. Slower and slower spun the wheel, until a quick eye could catch the individual numbers. The ball hovered on the edge of the adjoining number, then suddenly the wheel stopped, and down it dropped into the thirty-six.

Amos, who was dependent upon the generosity of the surgeon for every cent that he possessed in the world, had lost just seven hundred dollars.

Immediately everyone was talking at once. There

were a series of "hard luck, old man's" from the men and screams of congratulation from the women. The lady who had won was beginning to wonder if it was worth seven hundred and twenty dollars to a woman who had a million to have her actual age bruited all about her set. Couteau, from behind Edith, watched Amos curiously, and felt a gradual admiration displace his wrath.

"The bank acknowledges the obligation, but begs for twenty-four hours' grace!" he called so gayly that those who thought him really hard hit decided that they must have been in error. "The house laments, however, the compulsion of rewarding perfidious fibbery. We decline to believe that the lady played within six units of her age, but Fortune ever favors the fair!"

Shortly afterwards the party broke up, Dr. Couteau going first, as he was anxious to make a professional call before retiring. Amos was spending the night at the surgeon's house, and the weather being fine, he walked down Fifth Avenue. As he approached the house he saw a hansom standing at the door, and was surprised to see Ellsworth step out.

"Why, Dug——" he began.

"Come inside, Amos,—I want to speak to you."

Amos unlocked the door and turned on the light. Ellsworth looked at him for a moment in some embarrassment.

"Look here, Amos. How much did you lose in that beastly game?"

"Six hundred and fifty-eight," said Amos dully. Ellsworth noticed that he was haggard, and his manner listless and indifferent.

"Will Couteau help you to make good?"

"I don't intend to ask him!"

"Well—look here, Amos, I'm over seven hundred ahead. Will you take a loan of six hundred and fifty-eight—as from an old chum?"

Amos turned into the reception-room, snapped on the light, and folded the shutters. Ellsworth waited in the hall.

"Yes," said Amos shortly.

"Here you are, then,—any old time in the next twenty years—— I only wish that I could have invested all of my money as well! Good-night, old chap!"

"Good-night, Dug—and, say, Dug——"

But the door was impolitely slammed in Amos's face.

Amos was in the office when Dr. Couteau returned. The surgeon on entering did not notice him, but went to the table, lit a cigar, and took a few turns up and down the room.

"How much did you lose?" he asked presently, without looking around.

"Six hundred and fifty-eight," replied Amos.

"Where are you going to get it?"

"I've got it."

"Did you go to Ellsworth?" snarled the surgeon, turning on him so savagely that Amos shrank instinctively, not from fear, but as one shrinks before the outward spring of a caged animal.

"No, sir, he came to me."

"H'm!" The surgeon paused and for a moment remained lost in thought. Presently he walked to his desk, threw open his check-book, and wrote a check, which he handed still wet to Amos. It was to his name and for six hundred and fifty-eight dollars.

"Send Mr. Ellsworth this check to-night. I will have no gambling debts outstanding from this office. Your account is debited for six hundred and fifty-eight dollars, and in due time——"

"But——" interrupted Amos.

"Don't interrupt! This is purely a business proposition, although I must say that I had looked for a little better treatment than this from you, on purely ethical grounds. Don't misunderstand me, Amos. I'm not referring to your playing the wheel. You got roped in and couldn't very gracefully get out of it. That's a mere incident. If this office can't stand six hundred and fifty dollars' worth of social advertising we'd better take down our shingles. What I'm sore about is your not taking it for granted that I'd see you through. Now, don't try to explain it. You'll only trip on yourself, and get in a mess. Only next time come to me first. Meanwhile, just settle that money obligation—I only wish that we could settle the other one as easily. Good-night."

After he had gone Amos wrote to Ellsworth explaining the whole circumstance and reiterating the gratitude which he had tried to express when Ellsworth left. Dr. Couteau's check was inclosed.

CHAPTER XI

THE DANGER-ANGLE

WHEN Ellsworth had asked Edith to marry him he had told her in very beautiful language that in consideration of the disparity of their expectations he felt that he should ask her to wait until his fortunes should be more assured. Edith had said at once that she understood his feelings in the matter, and loved and respected him all the more for it. As far as the major was concerned, it was evident to Ellsworth that the longer the wedding day was postponed the better it would please him. Major Carter was in no hurry to share the attentions of his only daughter with some other fellow, no matter how good a sort he might be.

As the months wore on, despite his new responsibilities, Ellsworth's habits did not improve. Even Major Carter, while very fond of his prospective son-in-law, and broad as he was in his views towards what he considered the natural and harmless indulgences of youth, began to be somewhat worried, but his secret awe of Ellsworth's intellectual attainments prevented the friendly criticism which he had several times felt should be forthcoming.

Amos had been duly elected to membership in the Powhatan Club, and one Saturday afternoon, when he had drifted in on his way back to the hospital, he

found a convivial little gathering, consisting of Ellsworth, Duncan White, and two of Ellsworth's intimate friends—an artist named Gwynn and the city editor of one of the big "dailies," Gerald Forsyth.

"Come over, Amos," called White, "and help us sit on Dug. We've just been trying to impress him with the fact that an engaged man has got no right whatever to call his soul his own,—or his body, either, for that matter, and that he is simply security in trust."

"And can only be drawn upon by the beneficiary," continued Gwynn.

"Which being the case, he has utterly no right whatever to draw upon the fund by late suppers, the imbibing of tissue-consuming liquors, or by——"

"You people have been legally appointed executors, I take it?" interrupted Ellsworth dryly; "because otherwise, it seems to me that you are unlawfully tampering with other people's property!"

There was a moment's thoughtful pause, at the end of which Ellsworth arose.

"I'll leave you to study it out," he said. "You might draw up a set of resolutions and officially present them to the interested parties. I wouldn't stay with them if I were you, Amos,—I swear they're worse than a lot of New England tabbies at a sewing circle! Jove, for a deep and consuming interest in a moral vivisection that is none of its blank business I'll put my money on a New York social club as scratch entry in the human race!" He left the room.

"Departed as usual in a burst of glory," said Gwynn, when Ellsworth had left.

"I suppose Dug is right enough," said Forsyth thoughtfully. "It is none of our business in a way,

and yet if a man's friends can't try to get him on his course when things get a bit murky, I don't know who can."

"Dug certainly needs straightening out," said White. "If he keeps on as he is going he'll awake one of these fine days to the fact that he is rather more free to pursue his innocent pastimes than I fancy he'd care to be."

"Not a bit of it!" cut in Forsyth sharply. "Douglas is too big a man. As far as his engagement is concerned you can rest assured that he knows just where he stands. Why, the average woman would be clay in his hands. He's got as many facets as a well-cut diamond, and he is just about as bright and hard and cold when he is crossed."

"There are other diamonds——" began Gwynn.

"He is certainly doing great work for you just now," remarked White to Forsyth. "Is it true that Dug does his best writing when he's about half-screwed?"

"No, it's not!" replied Forsyth curtly. "The biggest fault in Dug's writing is an occasional dash almost of incoherence, which is obviously the result of a mind traveling faster than the pen can follow, and unable to slow the pace without damage to the thought. He has told me that liquor simply aggravates this condition, and that when he wants to work out something exceptional he has to relax in every possible way. Usually he accomplishes this by excessive physical effort. Why, do you know, the man gets up every morning at five o'clock, and bikes up around the Tomb and back before breakfast!"

"That explains how he keeps his condition," said

Gwynn, "as well as how he keeps the high grade of vitality to which he owes his magnetism. When a man leads a simple life of dissipation he may be popular enough, but he's not respected, while Dug is not only universally well-liked, but admired as well. When a fellow goes serenely on his way, breaking all such commandments of God and man as appear to cramp his style, he comes in for a certain amount of admiration so long as he continues to prosper. Eventually, his rope pulls taut and strangles him, and he is called a fool and other hard names, but in spite of all of his batting around Dug is always fresh and ruddy and cheerful and chipper. No, it's just as you say, Forsyth, Ellsworth is a big man, and he has a big career ahead of him! But it's past his friends. He'll have to work out his own salvation."

There was another thoughtful pause.

"Why so silent, Amos?" asked White. "Why don't you take a hand at the game? You roomed four years with Dug,—you ought to be able to throw in some interesting testimony,—or did his final jab leave a sting in you?"

The other men, who knew Amos but slightly, were silent. Gwynn looked at him rather challengingly.

"Oh, no,—no," replied Amos deliberately, with just the faintest suspicion of irony in his deep bass. "I don't know as there's anything scandalous or gossipy in cussing a man out to his face when he's around, and then getting together and singing close-harmony pæans of praise to him after he's gone. Usually it's the other way about. Only the whole proposition strikes me as being just a trifle futile. You fellows all line up and try to sweetly reason with him as re-

gards the evil of his ways, and then when he laughs at you and clears out you hold a meeting and pass resolutions that he's so darn brilliant that it ain't worth while to try and argue with him." He paused reflectively in a silence more eloquent than anything that had been up to that time said.

"The first year that we roomed together," Amos pursued reminiscently, "he came home full one night and started to rip the lining out of the room. I restrained him and put him to bed, and the next day remonstrated with him like a fond but outraged parent. He was pretty penitent and mournful, and promised very beautifully never to let it happen again. A week later it *did* happen again, and that time I chucked him out in the corridor, and hove a bucket of ice water over him, and then went in and locked the door——" He paused, and, looking through the window, rubbed his chin.

"What did he do then?" inquired Forsyth.

"Oh, he fetched the door a kick, and then I went out and flopped him down, and hove some more water over him. He got sick of it after a while, and went to sleep on a wood-box that was out there."

"Then what did you do?"

"Went back to bed. What did you think I'd do? Sit out there and hold his hand?"

"But he was soaking wet!"

"It wasn't a very cold night!"

"Wasn't he ill from it?"

"Oh, no,—he was young and tough, and full of beer and bull-meat."

"What did he say the next day?"

"Nothing mostly,—although I think he did harp

on being an orphan maybe,—and his views regarding the wisdom of his own behavior were real sensible. I believe he made some mention of once being told by a fortune-teller that he was destined to fill an early grave, and when I told him that if he ever did it again I reckoned I'd help out the prophecy, he appeared somewhat vexed."

"Did he ever do it again?"

"Nowhere approaching the same degree. You see, he always wanted to lay bare his soul to me on those occasions, and always insisted on coming home. Consequently, knowing my sentiments in regard to the matter, he was careful."

"How did he behave Senior year?" asked Gwynn curiously.

"Oh, well enough,—darn him, anyway,—let's talk about something else!" exclaimed Amos with a sudden impatience, and the subject was changed forthwith, the party breaking up soon afterwards as idle parties are apt to do on a change of topic.

Edith Carter watched Douglas's literary successes with pride and joy, but the growing knowledge of the loose-jointedness between his talents and his indulgences had cost her many an anxious moment. She could not believe that a man with Douglas's talents could ever allow them to be sacrificed to the mere gratification of sensual enjoyments. She pitted the pride of the man against his pleasure, and felt no fear of the result of the contest. Her only unhappiness was in the time it took for the process to occur.

As the months wore on, however, ugly doubts began to find their way into the girl's worried heart; doubts of a graver and more tragic character than those pro-

duced by an over-attention to the bowl. She tried not to harbor these miserable uncertainties, but the first real breach in Edith's confidence in her lover was too wide and plain to admit of any doubt. It came in the form of a note in the wrong envelope.

It was in answer to an invitation from Edith for a dinner to meet an English girl who was the cousin of one of Edith's Charleston friends.

The note that came from Ellsworth in answer to his fiancée's loving little epistle was an acceptance of an invitation to quite a different sort of a party. There was nothing especially incriminating about it, and it was even bright and clever in its way, but as she read it, Edith felt a cold chill strike at her heart. It seemed the questionably clever note of a vulgar man to a woman of doubtful character, with whom he was apparently on sufficiently familiar terms to address her by her first name. In his note, he had accepted with much enthusiasm an invitation to an entertainment referred to as a " Saturnalia," and what cut Edith to the heart was the fact that this doubtful event was to occur on the night of her dinner. The note was signed simply " Dug," and the date was a day later than that on which he must have received her invitation.

It never occurred to Edith that possibly she should not have read the letter after seeing that it was intended for someone else. The girl was so numbed with the first shock of the thing that her ethical perception was blunted.

She did not go down to dinner that night, as she knew that the major's keen old eyes would be quick to see her distress. The result was that when informed that his daughter was suffering from a sick

headache, the major had promptly departed for his club, rather than dine alone.

At half-past eight Edith's maid came up to announce that Mr. Ellsworth was below, and was particularly anxious to see her. The girl dressed hastily and went down, as she felt that she could not endure the present condition of things for another hour. At first it had been her intention to simply write him and say that for such a note as the one she had received there could be no possible explanation, and that it only served to confirm many things about his private life of which she had heard but refused to believe, etc., but she felt that she must see him. When a woman loves a man, his presence is often necessary to help her to bear the pain that his conduct has caused.

She was already beginning to frame excuses for him in her heart as she went down the stairs, and at the sight of his familiar figure, so dear to her, and so interwoven with all of the sweet and tender memories of their engagement, the tears gushed into her eyes. So dim they were that she did not notice the unusual pallor of his face and the strained, nervous expression of his eyes. For the past week Ellsworth had been driving his vitality by whip and spur, and while his magnificent constitution had never faltered, it was nevertheless beginning to near the point where stimulation will no longer be accepted in lieu of rest.

"Douglas!" she sobbed. "How *could* you?"

Strangely enough, he did not take her in his arms to claim the forgiveness which she was so plainly offering. That would have been a sort of physical expedient against which, just at that moment, his soul shrank. Due to the excesses of the past few days and

nights, the physical side of Ellsworth's nature had receded to a low ebb, while his brain, goaded past the fatigue limit, had reached a state of hyper-irritation, from the raw surface of which the swift mental processes flew and flashed like the sparks of a swiftly revolving emery wheel at the contact of a tool.

He had discovered his blunder, and knew that a reckoning was at hand, but he chose to meet the charges with his head rather than his heart.

"Why did you read the letter, Edith?" he asked quietly, scorning or, more probably, not seeing much interest in temporizing. "You must have seen at once that it was not intended for you!"

"I did not think, Douglas. The mere fact of its being in your writing seemed to make it mine. I did not realize that I had no right to read it until too late!"

Douglas was disappointed. He had thought that she might defend her action, instead of which she had simply regretted it. He preferred the rôle of plaintiff.

"It seems as if the first few words might have been enough to destroy that illusion."

"*Words* can never destroy that illusion, Douglas. Actions might." All trace of tears had left her sweet contralto voice, and she was looking at him with a quiet dignity that seemed to numb the quickness of his thought. He was a mortal, seeking to quarrel with a goddess.

"Words seem to have done so in the present case," he answered irritably. "You met me with a reproach."

"If the illusion had been injured I would not have

met you at all." The thoughtful expression of the long gray eyes was maddening. He stood away upon another tack, trying at the same time to remember just what the note had contained.

"Since you do not know the circumstances of the case, and considering how it must have read, I really have no right to ask you to believe that the whole thing was a very innocent sort of affair, but Love should not be confined to a Right. The whole thing was quite harmless, Edith,—especially to a playwright like myself."

"I had not considered the possibility of its being otherwise!"

"Then you had no right to get so down——"

"'Love should not be confined to a Right!'" she quoted softly. "Let us go in the library, Douglas,—it is cold in the hall. Take off your coat, dear; you will not feel it when you go out."

"I can only stop a minute," he replied coldly. In some way, the interview was not proceeding at all as he had planned. He followed the girl into the fine old library, with its family portraits and long shelves of handsome books. A soft-coal fire was flickering on the broad hearth, and Edith, drawing up an ottoman, seated herself in front of the yellow blaze. The glowing light was reflected ruddily from her sweet face and shimmering hair. At any other time his artist's soul would have found delight in the mellow warmth and beauty of the picture. Just then he was too tired.

"Don't let us talk about it, Douglas. You know that I have utter confidence in you, dear. It was because you seemed to prefer this entertainment to my

dinner that I was hurt, but I suppose that you had your own good reasons for that."

The sudden undeniable sense of his unworthiness of the girl before him, which would have shamed most men into contrition, only fanned his anger.

"It would not be fair to let you take too much for granted, Edith. A mild 'descensus Averni' is at times absolutely imperative to a man of my disposition. It is impossible always to live up to your exalted level,—if I did, I would have to get a different profession. You see, my dear, people who live by their wits are of rather different clay, otherwise they couldn't emanate constant new impressions. I'm afraid that I'm a bit of a mental epicure; good wholesome mind-food is all right as a steady diet, but we like a bit a trifle gamy once in a way!"

She turned slowly, and looked full into his face, and something in her eyes reminded him for the instant of a wounded doe whose throat he had once cut in the Adirondacks. There was something of the same expression of sickening fear, pain, and wonder. It hurt him like a knife in the side, yet made him wish to grasp it by the hilt and drive it home.

"Do you mean that you sometimes feel a craving for vice for its own sake, Douglas?"

"How perfectly you have caught the idea!" he replied in a tone of mocking admiration.

Her great gray eyes opened wider. The firelight was behind her head, her face was in the shadow, the pupils, big and dark and dilated, glowing up at him dimly. She could feel her love for him struggling for breath.

"You see, my dear," he went on, "our natures are

different. Some of us live in the strong light, and some in the shadow, and others in the great monotone. My life is one of strong contrasts, lights and shades, hills and valleys. There would be no object in reaching the heights, unless I had looked into the valleys."

She turned from him, and stared into the glowing embers.

"Are you sure that you are strong enough to reach the heights, Douglas?" Her voice thrilled him in its passionate intensity. "Are you sure—that you—can see the heights?"

"I have thought that I have reached them at times, Edith."

"Perhaps your mountains are not so high. Perhaps it is the valleys—that are—deep!"

Douglas, his highly colored metaphors stripped from him by this true-hearted woman, stood naked,—and ashamed. He felt that he was beaten, and that with the weapons of his own choice. He felt that he would gladly avail himself of the conditions offered first.

"Edith," he cried, and stepped quickly to her side. She rose quickly and stood with her back to the hearth.

"No, Douglas! Not to-night. I must think of what you have told me."

"But, Edith," he pleaded. "You know that I have reached the heights. We have stood there together,—you and I."

She shook her head sadly. "We were looking into the valleys, Douglas. There should be no valleys. *My* husband must be—a mountain in the plain!"

"But, Edith!—I have been talking like a fool. I——"

Her smile made him long to clasp her in his arms, but she seemed as far removed as though oceans lay between.

"I have told you already that no words could kill my faith in you, Douglas. You are not yourself to-night. You do not know what you have said. But, —don't try to kiss me, Douglas."

He turned shortly and strode to the door. Edith took one quick step, then paused by the side of a divan. Her heart seemed to swell until it would burst from her body.

"Good-night, Douglas!" she called feebly.

The crash of the latch was the only answer.

"Douglas!—Douglas!—Oh, Douglas, come back, —come back!"

She sank to the divan and buried her face in the pillows.

CHAPTER XII

ELLSWORTH AGROUND

THE sullen slam of the heavy door behind him did much to bring Douglas Ellsworth to his sober senses.

There is a weight of significance in a door closed in anger between two people who love each other, or have loved each other. It is a sort of little transient death,—a separation of body and spirit; a separation without the promise of an *au revoir.*

Douglas felt all of this without being able to appreciate it. That is, he felt the depression without the self-reproach, and the result on his semi-intoxicated brain was to make him excessively irritable. The sudden change of mood did much to sober him.

He crossed the street, and skirted along the edge of the park, uncertain how to spend the balance of the evening. If he had followed his inclinations, he would have quietly returned to his lodgings and gone to bed, but as it was, he felt that he owed it to himself to make a night of it. Such a course bespoke a blasé indifference to the petty quarrels of Bacchus and Venus, and would be the quickest way of anæsthetizing the sting proceeding from his lacerated feelings. From time immemorial, brave cavaliers have hied them to the grape when the girl proved sour, and besides, he reflected that he would probably be com-

pelled fairly to wallow in good resolutions in a day or two, when he attempted a reconciliation.

He dropped into the Histrion Club for a few minutes to see if he might encounter some sympathetic soul with whom to wander playwards, but the place was silent and deserted. Then he bethought him of a kindred spark domiciled in merry bachelor apartments not three blocks away, and took himself thither with all haste. His friend had gone out of town, and would not return for a week, so Douglas was balked a second time.

Ellsworth's intemperances were convivial rather than besotted. Drinking alone, for the sake of the alcohol itself, was not included in his numerous vices. If he could not find anyone to drink with him, he would go without drinking at all. This trait, of course, rather enhanced his reputation as a toper, because every time he indulged, he had at least one witness, and as many more as he could collect. It never occurred to him in his disappointment to refresh himself as he went along.

His next port of call was the Powhatan Club, and by the time that he reached there he was growing "dangerously sober," as he would have expressed it. There were several men about the club, but none of his own particular cronies, and he had cooled down enough to be fastidious. In deep disgust he went out again, and turned his steps toward another place of resort, where he was fairly certain of finding some congenial souls,—only to be once more disappointed.

When he got out into the street again the humor of the situation suddenly struck him.

"By George!" he thought to himself, as he walked along. "There's a story in that if it's properly worked

up." He mused on, building up the story in his mind, line by line, and touch by touch, until the motive of the whole fabric stood clearly and cleverly delineated. Then he turned sharply across town, and fifteen minutes later was in his rooms, coat thrown on the floor, collar and necktie hanging over a picture of Edith, several unopened letters scattered across his desk, and his busy pencil racing across sheet after sheet, to catch up with the hurrying fancies.

Douglas's first inspiration never showed in his subsequent work to any great extent. It was as if the discharge of thought impulse had a cumulative auto-productiveness, each idea as it was liberated seeming to set free a whole series of mind-waves which had a deeper origin. But the primal originating factor, although slight in texture, was sometimes obstinately unwilling to show itself. For this reason, any delay or break in his work was usually fatal to its completion.

Of course, this was all wrong, and not as it should be. One will argue that the mind should be the slave of the man, and not the reverse. No doubt Douglas, like many others of his own peculiar intellectual type, could have summoned his vagrant fancies at any time that he had wished, if he would only have made the honest effort, but while by no means intellectually weak, he was certainly mentally lazy; besides, he was fast persuading himself that any attempt to coerce his imaginings would result in damage to their spontaneity.

The early dawn was breaking smokily over the sleeping city when Ellsworth finally laid down his pencil with a sigh of fatigue. His story was com-

pleted, and he was satisfied that he could not improve upon what he had written. As was usually the case, he had so elaborated the fundamental idea in the construction of his story that it was as completely hidden as the foundations of a house, but from his meager elementary suggestion he had woven a strong, graceful, delicate web of romance that was altogether fascinating.

He folded up his manuscript, addressed it to his stenographer, and then threw himself face downward on his window seat. He did not intend to go to sleep; he simply wanted to rest for a moment before taking a bath. He wondered vaguely at the overpowering fatigue that seemed to prostrate him limb and body.

He had done his work in just this way, lived his life on this same plan heretofore, and had never felt so completely and helplessly exhausted. His head ached, and the air was stale and heavy from the fumes of the countless cigarettes that he had smoked. With petulant impatience at the effort that it cost him, he threw up the window sash, rolled heavily upon his face, and slept.

The valet, whose services he shared with several of the other occupants, found him in the same position when he came in at ten o'clock to look after his clothes. The cold draught from the window fanned across the back of the sleeping man, and when the valet wakened him, his lips were blue and his teeth chattering.

"There now, Mr. Ellsworth!" said the valet reproachfully, "a-writin' all night again, and then a-lyin' right down in the draught of that window——"

Douglas looked at him heavily. "Help me to bed, Jennings,—or wait,—hold on,—draw me a hot bath."

"Yes, sir,—do you feel knocked up, sir? Beg pardon, but you know I told you——"

"Yes, but that's not helping me any now. As soon as you get that bath fixed, Jennings, call up the Puritan Hospital and ask Dr. Knapp to come down and see me as soon as he can spare the time."

Douglas really was desperately ill. His body felt encircled in a band of steel which was gradually being drawn tighter and tighter. He could hardly breathe, and the pain and sense of compression across the small of his back were excruciating.

The valet helped him into the hot bath, and then hurried off to telephone to Dr. Knapp, somewhat altering the message, however, as Ellsworth's condition alarmed him. Just after he had finished rubbing the sufferer down, Amos arrived. He saw at a glance that he had a very sick man to treat, and when he had finished his examination, and had got the history of the case, he advised Douglas to be removed at once to the hospital. But the patient obstinately refused. He had never been sick in bed since childhood, and he had the primitive shyness often found in strong men, aborigines, and animals, of being seen by strangers when in an enfeebled condition.

Amos prescribed for him and was about to go when Douglas turned to him suddenly.

"See here, Amos,—I don't want you to tell anybody that I'm knocked out,—you won't,—will you?"

"Certainly not, if you would rather not have me,' answered Amos in surprise. "But aren't you going to let the Carters know?"

"No,—not for a minute. And I don't want all of those chumps at the club to come around here, 'I told

you so-ing.' I've been going the pace pretty hard because I liked the gait,—enjoy the exhilaration of traveling fast, and I'm run down, I know, and on top of it all I've been a damn fool and caught the devil of a cold which seems to have settled in every blooming vital in my body. But it's *my* body, and I'll do as I damn please with it. It's no one's business but my own,—except your business,—because you're the doctor."

"I know how you feel, Douglas," said Amos sympathetically. "It is a bore to have a lot of swivel-eyed yaps serving you out a ration of fake sympathy. But I think that the Carters have a right to know."

Douglas patted his sleeve. "Now that's where your jurisdiction ends, Doctor," he said, half-jokingly, half in earnest. "You're not mad, are you?" he called after Amos, who was walking to the door.

"No," he answered, turning, "only disgusted,—you're such a pig-headed, poorly convictioned sort of guillemot. I'll be in to see you again to-morrow morning,—and if you get out of that bed before I come again I swear by George, sick or well, I'll beat the hide off you!"

The following morning when Amos visited Ellsworth he found him rather worse. To complicate matters, Douglas was exceedingly nervous and irritable, and before he had been many minutes with him, Amos learned the cause.

"Just hang your orbs on that for a moment, Amos,—isn't that a nice kind of a billet-doux for a man in my condition to receive?"

He handed Amos a letter, the writing of which he immediately recognized as that of Edith Carter.

answer, I went down to call. I wasn't by any means tight,—couldn't have been, because that was the night I wrote all night long, and then fell asleep on that window-seat and caught cold,—but I'll admit that I'd had a cocktail or two,—just enough to make me affectionate and loving,—what's the matter?"

Amos had been holding a glass in his hand, and it had suddenly broken in fragments. He twisted his handkerchief around a slight cut on his palm.

"Oh, nothing,—pinched this Venetian ware too hard and busted it. Well,—go ahead with your yarn."

"That's about all. Edith got mad, and that made me sulky and I cleared out. Just as I slammed the door, I heard her call me back, but I had just enough booze in me to be dignified and indifferent. Up to this point I'll acknowledge she had some right to be huffy, and yesterday I thought it all out and made up my mind to forgive her and let the thing drop. Sit down,—don't be so restless,—what's the matter with you this morning anyway?"

"Have you since had reason to alter your magnanimous decision?" asked Amos, in a queer voice.

"I should say I had!—If there are any advances to be made now my lady can make them. Here's a letter from her in which she tells me that she leaves to-day for the South for a six-weeks' visit,—that during that time she would prefer not to have me write to her; a page or two in which she compares my love for her with my love for wine, other women, and song; a general and not altogether flattering summary of my character, and the final gracious statement that she does not wish to break her engagement with me, but that she will not under any circumstances marry me for at

least *two years*! Whether she finally decides to marry me then or not will depend on my behavior in the meantime! Did you ever hear such colossal, infernal——"

"*Shut up!* Man, are you in your right mind? What in——"

"Oh, come, Amos,—I take it all back! I know it's deuced unchivalrous and all that,—but——"

"Pipe down there, Douglas! Keep quiet now and I'll give you a bit of advice. You're sick,—mighty sick, d'y' understand,—and you're in no condition to size things up till you get on another tack. Now you just play that you're the patient and let me write and try and square things for you a bit. I wouldn't do it but that I know that you are going to stop drinking,—you needn't grin, this is no joke,—either you stop drinking or you stop living! Savvy? The best way is not to try to make excuses, but just to say that you are sorry, and you are sick. May I write?"

"No, by George! you mayn't! I have said that the first advances are to come from her,—and I mean it! I wouldn't write, by——"

"Sh-h-h. Keep quiet, old man. Here comes Dr. Couteau. I asked him to have a look at you!"

"The deuce you did! I thought I told you——"

"Oh, do dry up! I tell you, man, you're in bad shape. I'm not going to assume the responsibility of your case alone. Good-morning, Doctor!"

"Morning,—morning, Ellsworth." Dr. Couteau stood for a moment looking from one man to the other.

"Well, Amos,—you've got an original system of treating a bed patient,—stand across the room and yell curses at 'em. Find it has an antipyretic effect?"

Dr. Couteau was one of the very few people who had never yielded to the spell of Ellsworth's magnetism. For the sake of Edith, toward whom the surgeon felt almost as a father,—and that was a romance of itself, —Dr. Couteau had tried his best to like the man of her choice, and always made it a point to treat him with a consideration that was in itself the hall-mark of his dislike. When Dr. Couteau was painfully polite to a person, that individual might always know that he had in some way incurred the surgeon's distrust.

Ellsworth's intuition was far too keen for him not to have felt this hidden animosity from the first, but although he had left no stone unturned in his efforts to win the doctor's confidence, he was finally obliged to admit that it was useless. It worried him at first to feel that this man whom he really respected and could easily have liked should prove so persistently and politely hostile; then it made him angry, because it seemed so undeserved, although such a simple, apparently illogical and reasonless emotion found more sympathy with a disposition like Douglas's than a reasonable one would have found.

Dr. Couteau made his examination in a silence broken only by an occasional question, terse and to the point. When he had finished, he ran his eye over the notes which Amos, true to his hospital custom, had hung at the head of the bed.

"Well, Doctor?" asked Douglas somewhat nervously, "what do you find to be the matter with me?"

Douglas's nervousness was really due far less to apprehension in regard to his physical condition, than to the lack of sympathy with which the atmosphere about the surgeon seemed charged.

For a moment Dr. Couteau surveyed him thoughtfully, then seating himself at Douglas's desk, drummed noisily with his fingers.

"Several things. In the first place, you've been driving your physical machinery a good deal as a poor driver might abuse a good horse. Just because there was no protest from the machine, you've been foolish to think that its capabilities were limitless. Now you've put it to a strain which has almost, if not quite, torn it apart. You are going to pieces all at once,—like the 'one-hoss shay.' How a man with a fine physique can be such a consummate ass as to knock it to pieces as you have done, beats me. I really believe the slab-sided, knock-kneed, wind-broken, spavined kind of a man gets along better after all. If *he* makes a fool of himself, he hears from it at once and has to slacken the pace. Another six months of the life you have been living would have landed you in a pine box."

"That's cheerful," answered Douglas with a smile. He was a sportsman in every sense of the word, whatever else he might be, and not for his life would he have shown how deeply the doctor's words struck home. "I suppose now the pine-box stage of the game may be delayed for a few months?"

"It may be delayed until you're a hundred years old if you turn over a new leaf and behave yourself," replied the surgeon roughly. "I would not have told you how badly off you were if I considered that your case was permanently hopeless,—or even necessarily permanently serious. I think that it's principally rather functional than organic."

"What's the treatment?"

"Dr. Knapp will prescribe what medicines you need

for the present. He knows more about it than I do. I'm no pill peddler. But as soon as you're able you must make tracks for a different climate. Some place that is warm, dry, and of an even temperature. Then you must stay there,—the longer the better!"

Douglas pondered for a minute.

"How about Southern California?" he asked presently. "I have some friends there, and an uncle who owns a big fruit ranch."

"The very place,—couldn't be improved,—and the sooner you get out of this climate the better. You will be on your feet again in a few days, and then call in and let me go over you again. Good-day!"

Amos was the only one of his many friends who saw Douglas off for the West a week later.

CHAPTER XII

FLOTSAM AND JETSAM

THE year that followed these events passed quickly for Amos, yet none too quickly, for as the months wore on he found himself chafing against this period of preparation during which his keenest efforts saw no personal return beyond that of added experience. He gloried in the work itself and grew to love the atmosphere of that great roofed battleground where the valiant little white-robed company fought its daily fight with pain, disease, and death. The whole nature of the man being donative rather than receptive, he here found himself in his native medium, exercising his function, shedding his great surplus of vitality as a plant gives out its oxygen.

Had he stood solid upon his own feet the chances are that he would have considered but little the flight of time. As it was, while his sentiment toward the strong and generous hand that was guiding his course had merged gradually from respect to affection and from affection to a simple, steadfast devotion, yet Amos's nature was not of that type which rests contented in a steady receipt of favors, the repayment of which lies dim in the haze of futurity.

Although he had entered the hospital early in the summer, his official term of service did not begin until

the first of the following January and expired two years from that date. He had thought when he had agreed to Dr. Couteau's proposition, that even during his service in the hospital he would be able at odd moments to be of value to his patron, in which he was deceived, as there were no odd moments. Dr. Couteau had seen what was in Amos's mind, but had not enlightened him. He knew from experience that once a man whose heart was in his work became a working part of the great vital repair-shop whose doors are never closed, he would find no more respite than the crank-shaft of an ocean liner off soundings. Well the grizzled surgeon knew the grind: the long hours in the operating room, sometimes averaging eight hours a day in an anæsthetic-laden atmosphere of high temperature for a week or more and which when over for the day left much of the work in the wards still to do; the hours of broken rest where the tired interne might be called a half-dozen times between his night and morning.

He had seen successive crops of these fledgeling healers cheerfully doing the work of men of ripe years and experience, and at times he had seen them go down under the yoke. The hospital knows no Seventh Day of rest, and at times of public holiday the great wheels turn faster. When the northeast wind sheathes the ringing pavements in an icy mail and the arc lights glow blurred through the driving sleet, the ambulance surgeon is roused from his tired sleep with two minutes to protect his weary body from the cold; when Sirius blazes in the August sky and victims drop inert in the white heat, in street and ward the pressure rises. The soldier has his fame, the fire-fighter his glory and

gold, the combatant of disease his—what? At least it is potent.

During Amos's second summer in the hospital the Carters had been abroad, returning in the early autumn. In the winter that followed Amos met Edith at times, but not frequently, for as he advanced in grade his responsibility grew greater, especially as Dr. Couteau threw much of his own work on his staff. The grizzled veteran could look ahead to the years of maddening and compulsory inertia which the younger men with the hopefulness of youth might know but fail to appreciate, and he meant that this fundamental training should carry them through the doldrums of their professional career to where they caught the trades again. It is probable that Amos, by the time that he had reached this third summer in the hospital,—for he had entered several months ahead of his regular term, —had taken an active part in more surgery than would have come to him in the next fifteen years had he been building up his practice unassisted.

The midsummer heat was on the city and the wheels of the great urban mechanism were so expanded as to move but slowly. Uptown, streets of mansions shuttered and curtained contrasted in their gloom with the vibrating glare without. Downtown, the hum of activity droned sleepily along with the tired cadence of an August harvest-fly. Idle clerks fanned themselves in the darkened offices; in the streets below, people hugged the shady rim against the buildings and hurried to escape the scorching radiation of the pavements as six months hence they would hurry to escape the icy blasts about the corners.

East Side and West Side were the centers of activity.

There the suffocating spawn of poverty swarmed from the oven-like inclosures they called their homes as bees might swarm from a burning hive. The refreshing coolness of the corner-saloons took many of the men; the wharves, many of the children; others sought shady alleys; but the women of course had their work to do. In good days or bad, periods of wages high or low, strikes, famine or plenty, the women have always their work to do.

In the heart of the district stood the great gray urban-vitameter that measured the pulse, respiration, and temperature of the fevered city whose blood flowed in and out and past it. The great forbidding building whose drab walls were at most seasons inscrutably non-committal of the scenes within, had this day an appearance of almost panting sympathy with the outer world. From the high vaulted windows came shuffling murmurs, sometimes a laugh, sometimes a groan, less agonized than weary, the pattering shuffle of slippered feet, and here and there a hot eddy carrying the odor of iodoform and other smells of unclean purity.

A child toddled to one of the higher windows and tried to climb over the sill. In its hand was a snowy bandage rifled from a dressing tray, and as a round arm in blue and white alpaca snatched the extruding patient back to the ward, the bandage was dropped and fell, unrolling across a wire below, there to flutter and become unsightly.

A gaunt, unshaven face peered from a lower window and envied a passer-by. The passer-by looked up and envied the owner of the gaunt, unshaven face,—simply because it looked cool. Within the gray walls many cherished anticipations of getting out again;

outside the doors below were collected little groups of many seeking admittance.

An electric car dashed janglingly down the street with a clamorous energy that emphasized the heat. It stopped at the farther corner; a man descended with an alertness begotten of the late swift motion, and hurried to the hospital entrance, and pushed through the swarm about the door as one pushes through a flock of sheep. Some of those waiting recognized him with doubtful words; others in their glances; a few not at all. He in turn favored none with recognition, not from lack of heart, but from the heat.

He passed through the clinical waiting room and observed with impatience that it was full to overflowing, —also that there were many babies, and that the air was heavy with a sadness of noise and odor. In the consulting room beyond, Amos, clad principally in a garish shirt and a cigarette, awaited him. The cigarette he made pretense of discarding at the entrance of the chief.

"Hello, Knapp—going to lend me a hand?"

"Yes, if you want me to. I just wandered in to see how things were going in the O. P. D.[1] Rather slack in the wards to-day,—guess all the work stops down here."

"It does when it's good and hot and a chap wants to get off in time to go down to the beaches. I wonder what I run this clinic for anyway!—All I ever got out of it was the mumps last winter, and there's nothing to be learned where you've got to handle a case a minute and get through!" He stepped to the door.

"All right. Blue cards—one, two, three, four,—

[1] Out-Patient Department, or Hospital Dispensary.

twenty-one, twenty-two, twenty-three, twenty-four!—men on the right,—women on the left—hold on there! on the *right,* I said! Are you a woman? You're a good-looking one with that beard! Don't speak English? Well then—taka offa de hatta and vamos over there (with a push)! *Don't* spit on the floor!!"

The chief sorted the patients, wiped his brow, and beckoned to an elderly woman near the door.

"Come here please, madam, and answer some questions. Oh, come,"—his voice grew a shade gentler. "Don't be frightened,—I just want to ask you about yourself."

The woman came forward timidly and took the offered seat. She was past middle age and the color of her face merged with the dirty ocher of the wall. The frayed and faded cashmere shawl hung from her head and shoulders, clothing them as a wet towel clothes a towel-rack. Her features were most pitiful because patrician. The doctor, half sitting on the corner of the table, took a quick, sharp survey as he questioned her. Then he dictated to his assistant.

"Name, Martha Livingston; born, Virginia; widow; sews. Address?" He paused.

"Where do you live, Mrs. Livingston?" The tired eyes of the woman were averted. Her voice was almost inaudible.

"Ah hev no immediate address jes' now, suh,—that is, Ah have removed——"

"Give me the address of one of your friends."

The woman looked at the floor. "Unfohtunately mah friends ah ohl in the South, suh——"

"Where are you going to sleep to-night?" interrupted the doctor, looking at her fixedly.

A flush of color gave the faded yellow face an almost lifelike appearance; the dim eyes filled; the voice was lost somewhere under the loose folds of the tattered shawl.

"When did you eat your last meal?" pursued the doctor relentlessly. But there was no answer because the patient was sobbing softly in the hollow of her thin but delicately shaped hand.

"Take the history of the next case, Knapp, if you will," said the doctor, "then finish Mrs. Livingston's history and go over them both. I'm going to work off some of the men. There are a lot of chronics here that only need to have their prescriptions renewed." He stepped quickly across the hall.

A few medicines were prescribed for patients previously examined and then the new cases were taken in hand. The first was a Swedish stevedore of honest boyish face and the proportions of a Hercules, in whom the handling of heavy bales against the hour of sailing had brought to light a dangerously leaking heart valve. The nature of his condition was explained to him with a frankness that would have caused the immediate collapse of a neurasthenic, but he departed joyously confident that in spite of what had been told him, the little bottle of potent-tasting drugs would soon restore him to his former strength.

The doctor eyed the next patient with disfavor. He wore an air of unhealthy surfeit of food and drink. His waistcoat was of moleskin and his shoes of patent-leather, and his surplus jewelry would have been six months' pay to the man next him,—a red-sleeved Hibernian who had soaked himself full of malaria from the hole in which he dug his daily bread.

"What is your business?" asked the doctor of the clothing-store dummy.

"Doctor, I've been having a funny pain——"

"I didn't ask you that. What's your business? What d'you work at?"

"Well, I'll *tell* ye! My name's Rose, 'n fer the last——"

"Answer my question! What d'you do for a living?"

"Oh,—me? I don't see that that's got nothin' t'do with——"

"Can't treat you! Go out!"

The fat face grew purple. "Go out, hey!—when I've been a-waitin'—— Look-a-here, Doc,—what's the use in gettin' mad? I'm a baker——"

"Street stand?" asked the doctor.

"Not much. Why, I got a store down——"

"Can't treat you here. This clinic is for the poor. Good-day. Well, are you going, or do you want me to have you thrown out? You man over there by the window, lie down on that bench if you feel faint. Come here, uncle. What are you complaining of? Sunburn?—Teething, maybe?"

A very old darkey came forward.

"Yah, yah,—hoo-e. Dis niggah done cut he wisdom teef when de doctah 'way up yonder. No, sah, Ah done got a mis'ry in ma chaste——"

"All right, uncle,—sit down here and let me write you down in the book. Where did you say you were born? Africa?"

"Yas, *sir*. When I a young herrodic' I done get cotch 'n cahhied abohd one dem yere slave ships. Hit *mighty*——"

"Poor accommodations, eh?"

"Yah, yah,—hit shore t'be. Hit suttinly wus'n de bridge jam, yah, yah, hoo-e, I tole you——"

"Where did they take you?" asked the doctor, weakly allowing his interest to usurp a minute or two of his professional time.

"Dey nebber land we-all nowhere. Bimeby 'long come British man-o'-wah, 'n she shoot *blim! blim!* an' done knock de masts outen de slaver. Den she sink befoh de man-o'-wah done cotch up, but I de Cappen's servant an' I done jump in de watah an' swim aroun' twell I pick up. De man-o'-wah she go inter Chahlesston, an' de Cappen done leave me wiv a fren wot got a rice plantation kase I so glad ter git asho' dat I don't want to go back no mo'——"

"I see. Well, uncle, you sit right there and I'll examine you in a minute."

Another history was quickly taken, the examinations made, and the treatment prescribed, after which the doctor stepped into the next room to lend a hand to Amos, whom he heard making frantic efforts to carry on a conversation in text-book German with a Russian Jewess. His efforts were not being crowned with any remarkable success, and to complicate things further an unclean baby in the woman's arms was filling the little room with frenzied shrieks at being thumbed and poked by one not of the faith.

"What do you feed the baby?" asked the chief, casually stifling the clamor by means of a gauze pad held gently but firmly over the shrieking mouth.

"N'n'n—vell,—'n feed 'm meelk und tea, und peer, und——"

"How much beer do you feed her?"

"N'n'n, vell, zomdimes von glaz, zomdimes——"

"Do you give her beer every day?"

"N'n'n,—yas,—no, maybe so,—I dink so——"

"What solid food do you give the baby?"

"Vas?" (with a vacant stare).

"What else do you feed the baby?"

"N'n'n—brod und bananas und bologna——"

"And bats and bugs and beetles and brick bats—— Oh, Lord—look here, Martin!" He called the German orderly. "Take this woman aside and tell her not to feed that baby anything except what I am writing on this paper. Tell her that if she does, the baby will die, and she will be fined and sent to the Island for five years and then electrocuted! You woman by the door, give me your card! Sit down here. How long have you had that eruption—don't understand? Si, yo hablo español." He changed to Spanish. "How long has that eruption—those spots—been on your skin?" He summoned his assistant.

"Here's a good typical variola in the early macular stage. Yes, send her up to the isolation ward until she can be sent to the Island. She's a pretty sick woman just now,—really sicker than she will be when the eruption is well out. *Orderly!*"

Martin appeared in the doorway. "Martin," said the chief, "get a dozen vaccine points and then stand in the door and see that none of these patients go out until vaccinated. Doctor, go ahead and scratch the whole boiling as soon as you get the gear. Well, Mrs. Brady, you back here again,—I thought that we'd cured you up!"

"Arrah, Docthor, darlin', an' sure 'tis grrand I was 'til last avenin', whin I was tuk wid cramps in the back

of me hid, an' all the food I'm afther atin' this day was a sup o' tay which I dhrank last night——"

"Have you any pain now, Mrs. Brady?"

"Oh, tirrible, Docthor, tho' 'tis gone since Oi kem in——"

"Have you had any pain in your stomach?"

"Ah, yis, glory be to God,—an' afther takin' th' midcine sure me food lay that hivy on me chist that Oi——"

"Did you take that medicine internally?"

"No, sorr,—Oi dhrank it befure Oi wint to bid."

A weary look swept across the doctor's face. "I told you several times that that medicine was not to be taken internally,—it was a mouth wash——"

"Fer the gum-bile on me tongue. Sure now, Docthor, ye tould me thot kem from me stummic'——"

"So you thought that you'd get at the root of the evil! All right, it can't do you much harm. Stick out your tongue! all right, now take one of these tablets three times a day after meals——"

"But suppose Oi don't ate?"

"Well, you must eat."

"Wan o' thim?"

"Yes, three times a day after meals."

"How long afther males?"

"As soon as you get up from the table."

"But suppose Oi git up befure Oi'm finished atin'?"

"Then wait until you *are* finished."

"In wather?"

"No, dry on your tongue!"

"Arr', it's jokin' ye're, Docthor,—sure, me tongue is nivir dhry."

"Well, mine is, so for Heaven's sake go on along with you,—good-by."

The woman found her way out of the stuffy room, dripping a steady stream of benedictions and perspiration. The chief crossed the corridor, where the men were panting patiently and awaiting their turn. From the anteroom came sounds of weary shuffling feet, hot, heavy breathing, and occasionally the wailing cry of an infant. Through all the droning hum of the two big fans. From the paved court flanking the dispensary came frequent clash of hoofs and the quick staccato clatter of the gong as the busy ambulances rushed in and out with the victims of the humid heat.

Sharply on the closing hour the chief of clinic slammed shut the case-record book and walked into the other room, where he found Amos carefully examining a small naked infant which he held gingerly in one great paw, while he cautiously poked and prodded with a forefinger about the size of the patient's thigh. Beads of perspiration were clustered on the bushy eyebrows which were knotted with the intensity of mental effort. The picture reminded the chief of a great hulking boy examining a sick canary.

"That's nothing but a heat rash, Amos!" He gave the mother a few emphatic directions and turned to his volunteer assistant.

"The time's up, but there may be a straggler or two. Would you mind waiting a few minutes? I've got to hustle along."

Amos complied, and the chief departed in haste. As Amos turned to index the day's cases, he heard a slight shuffling in the entry. Turning to inspect the

newcomer, he leaped to his feet with an exclamation of surprise. Standing in the doorway was a meek-looking man of middle age.

"Why, Mr. Stanley!" cried Amos, reaching out a moist but welcoming hand. "I'm very glad to see you. What are you doing in town?"

The little clergyman dropped his thin hand in Amos's and seemed to find assurance in the contact.

"Thank you, Amos. I came down this morning." He paused irresolutely.

"Nothing wrong, I hope?" Amos asked quickly, drawing a chair for the guest.

"I trust not, Amos," replied the little man, nervously mopping his face, "but the fact is I am very anxious about Hope."

He paused again and looked at Amos appealingly.

"Yes?" said Amos.

"About eighteen months ago she came to town to fill a position as governess which Mr. Ellsworth was kind enough to secure for her. These are the people." He handed Amos a slip of paper on which were written a name and address. "Last summer she spent a fortnight at home, and since then she has written me every week or so, but while her letters have been cheerful and encouraging, there is something about them that rather puzzles me. She has never made the slightest reference to her work——"

Amos was conscious of a disagreeable throb of misgiving. "Yes," he said again.

"And in her last letter, which was in answer to one of mine in which I said that I might run down to see her for a day or two, she asked me to postpone the visit as she hoped to be able to run out to Shoal Har-

bor before long and thought the change of air would do her good!"

"Well——"

"Well, a few days ago one of my summer parishoners wanted to send his son, a boy of thirteen, to meet his elder brother, who is going to take him on a trip to the mountains. Not wishing to have the boy make the journey alone, he asked me if I would care to take him. Of course this gave me the opportunity to come to New York without expense, so I immediately availed myself of it. I telegraphed Hope that I was coming, and the following morning received a wire in answer."

He handed Amos a telegraphic slip, which read:

"Will not be in New York for a week. Will write."
"HOPE."

Amos read the message thoughtfully, then looked up at his visitor.

"I don't see any cause for worry in all this, Mr. Stanley. Hope has probably accompanied some of the family on a little trip and wanted you to try to postpone your visit." His tone was cheerfully matter-of-fact, but the shadow of misgiving cast by the first glance at his visitor had darkened.

"But you see, Amos, that is not all. I called at the address to inquire after Hope, and found the house, a very elegant one near Fifth Avenue, closed for the season. No one even answered the bell."

"Why, that explains it!" said Amos with a heartiness which he was far from feeling. "The heat has driven the family out of the city—probably in the last few days, and Hope has not yet written you about it.

Now, look here, Mr. Stanley," he resumed authoritatively, " you're giving yourself a whole lot of unnecessary anxiety. When people, no matter how devoted to one another, live a good way apart for a while, they are bound to grow a little careless about correspondence—especially young girls like Hope, whose attentions are all taken up by new surroundings. When did you plan to return? "

" Why, I had hoped to go back to-morrow evening, Amos," replied the little man in a tone of infinite relief.

" Then do so. To-night you dine with me, and afterwards I will so far upset your ecclesiastic equilibrium as to take you to a roof-garden—one of the garish amusements of a great city in the summer that you should certainly see in order to fully comprehend the pitfalls with which modern youth is beset," he went on hurriedly, seeing a feeble protest in the timid eyes of the little clergyman.

" Then you think there is no possible——"

" Not a particle. I will look the matter up myself as soon as you go back, and let you know if Hope's failure to write was due to illness or anything like that. What have you done with your kid—the boy? "

" He is waiting for me at the Windsor Hotel. His brother will stop for him a little later, on his way uptown."

" Then run along and keep him from getting lost, strayed, or stolen, and I will meet you at the hotel at six-thirty and show you things which are worth coming all the way from Shoal Harbor to see."

The little man, with manifold thanks, departed,

his meek face flushed as much with excited anticipation as at the intensity of the weather.

Amos, returning to his room, stopped at the office, and for a while went into an aqueous solution in the telephone-box. Following this hurried discourse he dispatched a telegram.

Later in the evening, the Rev. Peter Stanley, comfortably and coolly perched, as it seemed to him, midway between heaven and the wickedly sweltering earth beneath, a beverage before him profane only in appearance, witnessed such a wondrous exhibition of color, music, magic, and indecorum as effectively diverted his gaping senses from matters personal.

When finally Amos bade him good-night at the door of his hotel, he felt but little anxiety of insomnia resulting from paternal solicitude. The little clergyman, whose limit for retiring had not for years passed nine o'clock, was fairly stupid from fatigue of body and mind.

Amos, upon entering the hospital, was handed a telegram by the door-man. It bore a Newport superscription and simply read:

"Miss Stanley left my employ over a year ago. Address not known.

"H. M. HARGRAVE."

CHAPTER XIV

A WAIF

EVER since she had herself been a patient in the Puritan Hospital, Edith Carter had kept in touch with the institution, visiting the wards at times, and bringing books, flowers, delicacies, and, what no money can buy, cheer and encouragement to the sufferers. The most pathetic thing that can be said about the average ward patient in a great city hospital is, that he is more to be pitied out of the hospital than in it.

Kind-hearted members of the laity who visit these institutions see, as a rule, no farther than the four walls of the ward, with perhaps an awe-stricken glance into the unjustly dreaded operating-room. Their imagination seldom follows the inmates back to the sordid tenements to which they must in time return from the clean, well-ventilated scene of their sufferings, nor to the scanty, badly prepared food so different from the plain but wholesome meals of their convalescence. Strange to say, the patients themselves seldom appreciate how much better off they are in hospital than out. They have been educated to regard the hospital as a place of suffering and death and their traditions are often more convincing than their personal experiences.

One afternoon a few months before the expiration of his term of service, when Amos went up to the

wards to make his rounds, he found Edith Carter among the visitors who had temporarily left the ward in response to the bell rung by the head nurse on the appearance of the house surgeon and his staff. Although it was before the town season had opened, the Carters had come to the city to meet friends from the South who were making a summer visit North.

At sight of her, Amos's big features lit up in a way that was good to see.

"I am very glad to see you, Miss Carter," he exclaimed, "and I know that a good many others are, too. It doesn't seem right though to send *you* out of the ward for rounds. You're a P. G., you know."

Edith's smile was bright as she dropped her little hand in his big sinewy one, stained and roughened from the corrosive action of the solutions in which it was so constantly immersed. There was, however, a sadness lurking in the corners of her long gray eyes.

"And how are you, Dr. Knapp?" she replied. "It is ages since I saw you. We have been at Bar Harbor, you know. Are you worn out from the heat?—because you don't show it. You are always just the same; you always will be just the same, will you not?"

"I hope not," he answered, with a smile. He did not add that where she was concerned, he would never change. "May I call very soon?"

"Yes, indeed. Papa was just saying this afternoon that he had missed you so much, and that he hadn't been beaten at a game of chess since he went away. I suppose that you have been very busy!"

"Yes," he answered, "I *have* been busy."

"Doctor," she began timidly, "I've just come up from the children's ward, and the most pitiful baby

has just come in. The woman who brought it said that its mother had slipped when she was coming downstairs with the little thing in her arms, and I—I think that its back *must* be broken. It's the most heart-breaking young one. It doesn't cry a bit, but just lies there and looks and looks with the biggest, saddest eyes,—and when the nurse was bathing it, the little thing just covered its face with its tiny hands and never made a sound, though it must have hurt it dreadfully. The woman says that the mother was hurt also in the fall, but wouldn't come to the hospital. I thought," she hesitated timidly, "that I might go and see if I—I could do anything for her, as the woman says they are frightfully poor, and if it hadn't been for some of the neighbors they might have starved."

Amos's face softened. "I'll be down there in about half an hour," he said, "and we'll look over the youngster, and find out some more about the mother. I think that she'll come to the hospital if we send after her. Some of the poorer classes have queer ideas about the hospitals. Now, excuse me for a few minutes, and then we'll go down. You can come too if you wish."

"Oh, thanks,—I am really interested in that baby."

"All right,—I'll be at your service very soon." He smiled reassuringly and stepped inside the big doors, which closed silently behind him.

Amos's rounds through the wards were usually much longer than the actual physical necessities of his patients required, but it had always been his theory that there were far more important things for the doctor to give his patients than medicine. The result was, that whereas he dispensed but few drugs, he usually

left behind him a trail of cheer and good-feeling instead of bad tastes. The therapeutic action of a laugh here, a joke there, and a little sympathy all around, is sometimes marvelous to contemplate. There is more truth than poetry in the old adage of "Drs. Diet, Quiet, and Merryman," especially the latter, with surgical cases and convalescents.

The children's ward was the last to be visited, as it was smaller than the others and therefore needed less time for surgical dressings before the arrival of the visiting surgeon. As soon as he had finished in the other wards, as his staff had a good deal to do, Amos sent them about their different duties and proceeded alone to the children's ward. To be strictly truthful, this act of consideration was not altogether unselfish, and in no way deceived the junior and senior internes, who hastened to assure him that they were in no hurry whatever to begin on dressing and laboratory work, whereupon Amos smiled a broad but wicked smile and throwing etiquette to the winds swung on his heel and growled, "Scat,—damn ye," which cleared the doubt as to his meaning.

Amos found Edith Carter talking to one of the nurses just outside the children's ward, and they all went in together. As they entered, it struck Edith that the greatest tribute that could be paid to Amos's character was the way in which the youngsters bounced up and down on their cots and howled with glee at the sight of their doctor. Even the little rascals that were still unable to talk, stretched out their tiny and often wasted arms and gurgled and bubbled a welcome, sometimes overflowing with joy, and pap. One sturdy convalescent, aged four, who had been

busily engaged in catching flies on the window-pane, and rendering them aseptic, as became inmates of a hospital, by a speedy immersion in a basin of bichloride intended as a hand wash, catching sight of his doctor, came tacking across from the far corner of the ward, and tripping his toe on the end of a crutch, hurled himself at Amos's feet. Edith gave a gasp, but before the baby touched the floor a great paw covered the front of his chest, and the next moment he was swaying gently back and forth at arm's length above his doctor's head, squealing with rapture and excitement, while howls of approval rose ceilingward from his companions.

The treatment of the next patient, a rosy little girl of five, who had come in with a crushed leg, was a chocolate caramel, slyly produced from some mysterious corner of the doctor's person, and bestowed with a wink and a nod which she understood to mean the strictest secrecy. A healthy-looking urchin with one arm had an apple prescribed on the spot, a treatment which appeared to find great favor in his eyes, but when Amos tried to covertly slip a few peanuts into the hand of a swarthy little youngster in a wheel-chair, one of them unfortunately dropped on the floor, whereupon Edith saw a reversal of hospital discipline that made her open her eyes. The head nurse of the ward, a motherly-looking woman of slightly more than middle age, threw her P. R. T. chart smartly on the cot by which she was standing, and glared at Amos with speechless indignation.

"*Peanuts!!*—Well, I never,—and that child but two days off his fluid diet! Dr. Amos Knapp, I've a good mind to shake you. Whatever on earth are you

a-thinking of,—after all of your experience with these blessed young ones! My lands!" She turned her eyes heavenwards, as if to implore divine guidance for one so utterly depraved.

Amos shifted his weight and looked as sheepish as a schoolboy caught with a surreptitious cigarette.

"Oh, come, Mrs. Raegan. He's a little dago, and his father keeps a fruit and peanut shop,—he's been brought up on 'em,—system requires 'em. He asked me for some yesterday, and I don't think——"

"You don't know anything about it," interrupted the nurse emphatically. "I suppose that if that youngster with appendicitis asked you for some lobster salad, you'd smuggle some in in your pocket, and give it to him when I wa'n't looking!" She turned to Edith appealingly. "Some men-folks don't ever seem to get no sense, Miss Carter. I did allow that Dr. Knapp had some,—for a while,—because he comes from down my way, I suppose, but he's just like all the rest! Now, there was Dr. Couteau,—there wa'n't ever a doctor come in this hospital that I had more respec' for than Dr. Couteau, and, my land!—what d'you suppose he did one day when I wa'n't here? There was a little young one in the ward that had broke his collar-bone only a few days before, and b'sides that he had a right bad cough, and before I left,—I was going down Boston way for a week to see my sister Marthy that had inflamm't'ry rheumatism,—before I went away I left p'tic'lar directions that that child wa'n't to set foot outside the ward till I got back,—these corridors are draughty's they can *be,* and will you b'lieve it, I hadn't been gone three days when Dr. Couteau took that child out for a buggy ride in the

park? Oh, there ain't no depending on *any* of 'em!"

Amos winked slyly at Edith.

"And I suppose the child caught cold and died?"

"There now, Dr. Knapp, you know just as well as I do that he didn't do nothing of the sort, you being Junior at the time,—though why he didn't catch pneumony the Lord only knows. The child went out the hospital four days later as chipper as you 'r me,—but there's no accountin' for the ways of Providence!"

"How is Janey?" asked Amos craftily. He knew that Janey was the good woman's pride and joy,—especially as the opinions of the doctor and nurse had been at variance, and that of the nurse had triumphed.

The motherly face brightened, and she walked over to the next cot. Edith noticed that she glanced sharply at the little patient with the peanuts, but nevertheless did not deprive him of the delicacy.

Amos looked at her over his shoulder and smiled broadly, at which the girl came near laughing outright. The spectacle of the motherly little nurse bullying this big man reminded her so much of the way in which she had seen a bantam hen with a brood of chicks drive off an inquisitive mastiff.

"Janey" was a sweet-faced little daughter of the slums, who was suffering from hip-joint disease, and Edith felt her eyes grow dim as the tiny waif took Amos's great rough hand in both her little wasted ones, and held it for a moment against her cheek. He sat down and talked to the child for a few minutes,—not as he had joked with the other children, but naturally, and as if she were his equal in age and understanding, and Edith was amazed at the placid clear-

mindedness of this little girl, whose mother was of the dregs of society, and whose drunken father had thrown her across the room and down the stairs because her lameness had made her slow in carrying the heavy pitcher from the corner saloon.

Soon the child's great dark eyes fastened upon a little brooch that pinned Edith's chatelaine to her jacket. It was an insignificant trifle that she had picked up in some shop purely for its utilitarian purposes when she was traveling, and intended to throw aside on her return home, but to the child it seemed a most glorious piece of finery.

"What a *lovely* pin!" she sighed presently.

Edith slipped the trinket from its place, and before the child knew it, had pinned it to the little scarf that the nurse had thrown about her shoulders.

"Do you like it, dear?" she said softly,—"then you shall have it all for your own,—I have lots more."

The little patient's big eyes filled with tears, and reaching out her free hand she took Edith's and kissed it softly, then dropped it upon Amos's, which was lying in her lap. At the touch, Edith felt the warm blood stealing up into her face, and Amos's heart gave a leap that suffocated him. For a moment the girl let her hand rest where it was, then gently disengaged it and patted the little patient's cheek.

"Oh, you are all so kind!" exclaimed the child,—"and I think that God is like Dr. Knapp!"

"Janey, Janey——" began the somewhat scandalized nurse.

"He is a nice doctor, isn't he?" said Edith. "You know he took care of me once when I had a broken leg."

"*Did* he?" she exclaimed. "Oh, don't you *love* him? *I* do!"

Mrs. Raegan coughed, and the color, which had not left Edith's face, heightened. Amos was hopelessly *hors de combat.*

"And he loves you, I am sure," replied Edith.

With the childish persistency that is sometimes so embarrassing because of its perfect innocence, the little girl would not stop with this answer. Besides, her sharp eyes had caught the sudden gleam that had crossed her doctor's face.

"And I am sure that he loves you," she declared. "I can tell it by the way he looks at you."

Amos's face darkened slightly, for he felt Edith's confusion.

"Come, Janey," he said, and his voice was so deep that the little girl's big eyes opened wider. "You haven't thanked the lady for the pin yet."

"She knows how much I like it, and I will always wear it to remember her by."

"Good-by, dear," said Edith, patting her hand; "I'll come in and see you again before long."

They walked to the next cot, but the little occupant was fast asleep, so Amos simply glanced at its chart and passed on. The rest of the children in the ward were soon visited and prescribed for, as it was growing late in the morning, and Amos had an hour's operating to do before luncheon.

"The little one I was telling you about is over in the nurses' room," said Edith. "Mrs. Raegan put it there because she thought it might cry and disturb the others, but she says that it hasn't made a sound since it came in."

Mrs. Raegan shook her head sadly.

"I'm afraid that baby's not long for this world,—poor dear."

They walked across the ward, and entered the little alcove. As Amos leaned over the cot, the baby opened its eyes and looked straight into his. Edith noticed how his brows straightened as he looked at the child, and felt instinctively that its expression had in some way affected him. For a moment Amos stared down into the cot, and then turned and looked at the others with a puzzled expression.

"Has it ever been here before?" he asked.

There was something about the wise calm gaze that had given him a positive start, and a queer feeling of familiarity, yet as he studied it carefully he could see nothing unusual about it.

"Not as I know of," replied Mrs. Raegan,—"at least the woman that brought it here said nothing about it."

"Is she here, now?" asked Amos.

"Yes, doctor, she's waiting outside to hear what you say about it, so as to tell the mother."

"Tell her to come in."

Mrs. Raegan went to the door, and in a few minutes returned with a gaunt Irishwoman, whose eyes showed signs of weeping.

"Good-morning," said Amos. "Has this child ever been to the hospital before?"

"No, Docthor, sure the poor darlint was always foine till last night whin the mither av im was afther fallin' down the shtairs wid the bye in her arrums. The mither do be——"

"What's his name?"

"Shure 'tis Pether she do be callin'——"

"I mean his last name,—his mother's married name,—her husband's name!"

"Ah-h, shure her man is dead, Hivin rest his sowl."

"Oh, Lord!" groaned Amos under his breath, and Edith smiled in spite of herself.

"How long has she been married?" asked Amos, taking a fresh start.

"Troth, Docthor dear, 'tis not for the likes of me to say, but I do be havin' me doubts,—savin' the prisince of the lady——"

"What name does she call herself by?" asked Amos desperately.

"Mrs. Lowell, but 'tis not the name wrote on the shimmy av her, d'ye moind, fer wan day whin I was helpin' her wid the wash, I come acrost a shimmy and a pair o'——"

"What was the name you saw?" asked Amos quickly and in some trepidation, for it appeared that Mrs. Dougan was cursed with no false modesty. Edith was leaning over the cot, and Amos could not see her face, but he caught a glimpse of a pink forehead, and thought—but could not be sure—that there was a slight shake to her shoulders.

"The *name,* is it? Shure, 't has shlipped me moind entoirely, only I remimber 'twas not the same. Howiver, 'tis no proof——"

"And you say that she is now hurt?"

"She is that! Wasn't I afther puttin' her to bid mesilf, and she cryin' wid the pain in her shoulder and sayin' 'tis dislocated it was. The divil a bit would she go to the hospital, though says she to me, 'Mary,' says she, 'fer the love o' the Virgin sind fer th'

amberlance,' says she, ' fer if anything happins to baby 'twill br-reak me har-rt,' says she, an' wid that the poor divil tuk te—te—umph,—umph,"—and Mrs. Dougan was unable to proceed.

"Give me her address, Mrs. Dougan," said Amos in a low voice, taking out his pencil. He did not see the alert look on Edith's face, nor notice her scribbling on her cuff as the Irishwoman gave the street and number.

"And the bye, Docthor?" asked the woman. "'Twill get well now? 'Twould break the har-rt av her if annything shud happen to the bye. Manny the time's she'd sit an' watch 'im crawlin' on the flure, an say to hersilf loike, ' 'Tis the livin' image of *him*, except fer the looks av 'im,' says she. ' 'Tis his eyes he's got, an' his chin, an' his expreshun,' says she, as he'd sit be the stove a-suckin' at his sugar-tit, an' wid that she'd take a picture from out of the buzzom av 'er an' stare at it wid the big tears a-rollin' down the cheeks av 'er. Sure, 'tis good news you'll be afther givin' me to carry to the poor sowl."

Amos did not reply, but leaning over the cot, gently turned back the coverlet, and exposed the tiny body, which he examined in silence only broken by the sobs of the kind-hearted Mrs. Dougan. He turned to her in a few minutes, and the big face seemed to reflect the suffering of the infant.

"I'm very sorry," he said simply, "but this baby will probably not live another twenty-four hours. It is better so, because if it did live it would be a helpless cripple for the rest of its life."

Mrs. Raegan leaned over and began to straighten the jars and bottles on the dressing table by the door.

Edith turned to the window and looked out over the city with blurred and misty eyes. Mrs. Dougan rocked to and fro in her chair and crooned a dirge of the moors and peat-hags.

"'Tis mesilf that knew it all the time, avin whin I was prayin' wid faith in me heart. Ah-h, wirra, wirra, 'tis the death av her 'twill be——"

"Good-morning, Mrs. Dougan," said Amos gruffly. "Miss Carter, wouldn't you like to go over to the matron's room and meet some of your old friends?"

He motioned her to lead the way, and as the doors closed behind them the gray walls threw back a joyous peal of childish laughter.

CHAPTER XV

LOVE DERELICT

AMOS was busily packing his suit-case. There was nothing extraordinary in this, but if any of his friends had seen what he was putting into it they might have been surprised, and possibly somewhat scandalized.

First he laid in two woman's nightgowns, surreptitiously smuggled from the ward linen-closet. Next came two pairs of stockings, donated by a nurse in whom he had confided. Followed other garments of feminine apparel, the technical names of which he wotted not. Then his roving eyes fell upon three copies of current magazines lying on his table, and as one inspired he threw them in. Certain nourishing delicacies came next, and a bottle of brandy. These were personal properties, but if it had befallen that they were not, their fate would not have been different.

The top layer of this miscellaneous assortment was a bunch of bandages and certain remedies that would later be charged to the profit and loss account of the Puritan Hospital, New York. Then he arose and studied his collection, scratching his head the while.

With a sigh of regret that the case was not more spacious, he jerked the bulging sides together with a rather vicious tug, then laid it on its side and sat upon

it. This done, he strapped and locked it,—then suddenly discovered that certain essential articles had been overlooked, and was obliged to open it again, uttering strange words for which one might search a medical dictionary in vain.

When finally he had finished, beads of perspiration stood upon his brow, and fumes of anger bubbled in his heart, but deeper still lay the effect of a tale of destitution told him by Mrs. Dougan, when after depositing Edith with the matron, he had sneaked back to the children's ward.

Later in the afternoon, his powerful figure might have been seen striding slumwards with heavy plunging steps, the bellying suit-case swinging from a sinewy arm. A street urchin begged the privilege of carrying it, and with a sardonic grin he handed it to him for an instant, and then grabbed him by the collar just in time to save him from plunging head foremost into the gutter with his precious burden. But the youngster, though diminutive, was game.

"Dat's all right, mister," he gasped, steadying himself, and getting a firmer grip. "How far ye goin',—to de 'L'?"

"No," said Amos,—"to the ferry."

"Which ferry,—Forty-second Street?"

"Tenth Street," said Amos solemnly.

"Hully Gee!!—goin' ter walk all dat way?"

"Sure!"

The boy's interest appeared to wane, but he struggled manfully a few steps farther.

"Say, mister,—me mudder told me ter get back in time ter carry de ol' man his pail at four. It's almost dat now!"

"Then you'd better scoot and save yourself a licking," said Amos, striding along.

"Guess I better had!" said the boy, setting down the case and mopping his brow with an unclean scrap of a rag.

Amos picked up the case and went on, but the curiosity of the urchin was aroused.

"Say, mister,—d'ye mind tellin' a feller what yer got in dat grip?"

"Not if you promise not to tell," said Amos, hastening his step.

"Cross me heart," said the boy.

"Well, then,—a chisel, a jimmy, a dark lantern, a couple o' sledges, a slung shot, some swag, two revolvers, and a *dagger!*" He glared at him fiercely.

"*Hully Gee!!*" exclaimed the boy, and fell back a few steps, staring after Amos with eyes big with awe and admiration. "Good-by, mister—I won't tell nobody,—cross me heart!"

Now it chanced that this particular boy was an ardent admirer and faithful disciple of "The Human Bloodhound" and "Dick Dead-Eye, the Daring Detective," and a few others who held five- and ten-cent admission tickets to the halls of fame. He had made a life study of the methods of several of these gentlemen, and his technical knowledge told him that he should promptly shadow this dangerous man, until he might obtain some more damning evidence. But inasmuch as he was unarmed, and his quarry was a fast walker, he was compelled to fall back upon the assistance of the police, for whom he cherished the most profound contempt. Catching sight of "One of the Finest," who unfortunately was not one of the

brightest, on the other side of the street, he darted across and tugged at his sleeve.

"Say," he gasped, "d'ye see dat big feller wid de hand-trunk? He's a crook; he is,—a cracksman!"

"Ah-h g'wan!"

The situation was growing desperate, for Amos was walking rapidly, when suddenly, to the joy of the young sleuth, he paused to look at something in a shop window.

"Say,—dis ain't no con game!" said the boy quickly. He caught his breath and took the leap. "Say,—he give me his grip to carry, an' it was so heavy I dropped it, 'n wen it dropped it bust open, 'n they was a lot uv silver 'n watches 'n dimons' 'n——"

"Wot's that," demanded the policeman quickly. He had heard in police-stations legends of discoveries of this sort, and here might be the clew to a daring robbery that had recently mystified the force.

"Dat's right,—ye better foller 'im," said the boy. "Look,—dere 'e goes again!"

"G'wan home 'r I'll run ye in!" said the policeman, so sternly that the boy fled. When he was satisfied that he had gone, the officer walked on downtown abreast of Amos on the other side of the street. A few blocks below he came to the end of his beat, but he kept on, and a block farther he came across a flashy-looking gentleman who was standing in front of the door of a saloon, chewing a toothpick. To him the officer pointed out Amos and said a word or two, with the result that the flashy-looking gentleman said rather loudly, "I ain't no bunco-steer"—and started downtown as though just ordered off the beat. The police-

man took off his helmet, mopped his brow, for he seldom was obliged to walk so rapidly for so long a way, and returned to his former strategic position.

Shortly he met an acquaintance: a gentleman who had recently taken high honors in a school of anarchy, and who had thereupon promptly received a most flattering offer as an assistant city editor of the New York *Glare,* a sheet devoted to the entertaining and impoverishment of the laborer. In justice to himself, the officer regaled his friend to about five minutes' conversation, which so stimulated his imagination that in an incredibly short time men were crying extras on the streets which were to tell the supposed cracksman —and incidentally the public—how, through the vigilance of Patrolman Phelan, a clew had at last been found which would, before the evening issue was out, lead to the arrest of the head of the gang who had plundered the Harvey mansion on Fifth Avenue, and who had for the last week baffled all of the efforts of the police. Followed a eulogy of the burglars, the police, the *Glare,* and a condemnation of the social system which allowed a tyrant like James J. Harvey to accumulate such enormous wealth as to start poor men on the downward path, etc.

Amos in the meantime, all unconscious of the avalanche he had started by the little pebble of untruth that he had jokingly thrown over the edge of the cliff, kept on down Third Avenue, until he had reached his street, where he turned eastward and walked toward the river. It was not an aristocratic neighborhood, but Amos was perfectly at home in it, thanks to his ambulance experience, and was even so far flattered as to be recognized by one or two barroom

loafers whom he passed. He went rapidly along, scanning the numbers of the sordid tenements and picking his way carefully among a swarm of dirty-faced children sprawling across the pavement. Aside from the foul nests where European scum occasionally coagulates, the district in which he found himself was about as bad as any that he had ever been in. Not in the length of the whole street was there one of the garish modern tenements, resplendent with a veneer of brownstone facings and a handrail of gaudy but somewhat tarnished brass on the front stoop. Most of the houses were of crumbling brick, with a black hole frescoed around its edges with the prints of greasy hands for an entrance, and not rating three whole window-panes to the entire building. Dirty children were playing in the gutters and climbing over the iron railings, and now and again one of them would slip or fall or jam in the door, whereupon his wails would rise to heaven, and from a dozen windows up and down the street, frowsy, slatternly heads would emerge and a dozen raucous voices be raised in angry admonition.

A cab was standing in front of one of the most disreputable houses halfway down the block, and a dozen urchins were solemnly inspecting it. Cabs did not often pull up in front of Murphy's row of flats. Just at this point there seemed to be a gap in the sequence of numbers that Amos was trailing down, and the missing link in the chain was the one he sought. He knew, however, the greater neighborliness of the dwellers in "Murphy's Row" fronting the gas-works, than in the dwellers of, for instance, the "Alsace-Lorraine" facing the Park. Reaching in his change

pocket, he drew out a couple of pennies, and tossed them to a ferret-eyed youngster that was explaining the cab system to his colleagues.

"Show me where Mrs. Dougan lives, son." He knew that Mrs. Dougan had the rooms under the one occupied by "Mrs. Lowell."

The boy eyed him for a moment with suspicion,—then weakened under the potent influence of the heavy bribe.

"Dis way, mister." He dove like a weasel into a dark alley, and Amos followed—stepping carefully. He saw that the house which he sought was at the bottom of the not very lofty scale of those about it; that is, it was what is known as a "rear house"—a house built in behind the row facing the street.

The alley emerged into a stone-paved court, which smelt sourly of rancid soap, and other things. Overhead swung garments of strange material and design, pendant from lines rove across the open space from window to window. Some of these dripped oozily, flecking those beneath with their dyes,—which led to much inter-fenestral argument.

On the other side of the shallow court was another hole,—if anything darker, and more noxious than the one from which he had just emerged. Into this Amos plunged and began a rickety ascent with an inward prayer that none of the step-boards was loose. Once as he reached a landing a door opened softly, to be quickly slammed in his face,—while a smothered "Cheese it" came from the inside of the room. Higher up, he smelt a queer odor, which he identified as opium, but to all of this he was hardened.

"Dere's where she lives!" said his guide presently,

pointing into the Egyptian darkness at the end of the hall.

"All right," said Amos,—"you've doubled your pay, I reckon." He handed the boy two more coppers.

"T'anks!" He departed swiftly to the shop across the street, where cigarettes might be obtained and his prestige thereby augmented.

Amos fumbled down the hall, and rapped sharply on the door. No answer, and he rapped again.

A door above opened and a heavy step sounded over his head.

"Who are ye?" came over the banisters in a familiar voice.

"Is that you, Mrs. Dougan?"

"Troth, ye're wiser then mesilf, widout 'tis the gas-man."

"I don't believe the gas-man does much business in this flat," said Amos, pawing his way along the wall. Mrs. Dougan leaned so far over the railing that she came near going over head first. Directly Amos emerged into a feeble and much overworked ray of light from a small skylight in the roof.

"Hivin rist me sowl, 'tis the docthor!"

"Don't make such a racket!" said Amos impatiently; "do you want everyone in the house up here?"

"Divil a fear,—I dhon't asshochiate wid the loikes av thim ither tinints," replied Mrs. Dougan somewhat loftily.

"Does Mrs. Lowell live in here?" asked Amos, when he had reached the top of the rickety stairs.

"She do!" replied Mrs. Dougan.

Amos walked to the battered door, which was a few inches ajar, and stepped inside.

The room was very large, very low, and suffocatingly hot, as the sun was shining brightly outside,—and also on the tin roof overhead. There had originally been two windows, but one of them had been boarded up,—probably during the winter. The glare from the other shining in Amos's eyes as he came out of the blackness beneath, for the moment dazzled him.

As his eyes accommodated themselves to the light, he saw a dilapidated bedstead in the corner near the window, where lay the sufferer. Sitting by the bed with her back turned to him, was the figure of a woman, silhouetted against the scrap of sky beyond. He stepped aside to avoid the white light, and as he did so she half turned and looked at him over her shoulder.

"Miss Carter!" he exclaimed.

She answered quietly: "I thought that you would come,—if you hadn't, I was going to send for you. I —I have just told her about her child."

Amos set down his grip and stepped to the bedside. The woman was lying with her back to him, her face buried in the bend of her elbow. Her shoulders were heaving convulsively, and a mass of red gold hair was strewn across the pillow. He leaned over her, and as he did so, she turned her head and looked at him with wild dry eyes. He started back, gripping the bedpost.

"Hope!"

The woman raised herself sharply, and her eyes grew fixed and staring.

"Amos!—Oh, Amos, is it really you?"

Miss Carter rose quickly from her seat, and looked at him strangely.

Amos leaned down again, and took the patient's thin hand in his.

"Hope," he repeated softly, "how long have you been here?"

"Oh, Amos," she cried, disregarding his question, "is it really true, is my boy going to—to *die?* Oh, no, Amos—no,—he really can't be going to die,—not really, Amos,—not really! Surely you can do something,—something. Oh, you must,—you must!"

He patted her hand gently. "We will see, Hope,—we will see." He threw an anxious glance at Edith.

"How long have *you* been here?" he asked.

"I have just come,—about ten minutes," she answered in a queer voice.

He longed to find out how much she had learned, but dreaded asking. He felt that if she knew what he suspected, it would break her heart,—yet why did she act so strangely. In his rugged honesty, it never struck him, how queerly it must have sounded to hear his Christian name on the lips of this beautiful but destitute woman whose past was clothed in such a mystery. Then his professional solicitude usurped the personal. He seated himself by the bedside.

"Mrs. Dougan says that you are hurt, child. Let us see what is the matter."

"Oh, never mind *that!*—it is nothing. Tell me about my child, Amos!" The great blue eyes were burning with the fever of her mother love.

"All in good time, Hope. Now you must do as I say!" His voice was firm though rich with sympathy.

Hope groaned, and fell back on the bed. "Oh, you are cruel,—it is my shoulder,—the left one,—I struck it as I fell!"

He raised her gently

"Slip off her nightgown!" he said to Edith. There was no request in his voice; it was imperative, and automatically she did as she was told.

Amos examined the shoulder carefully, then compared it with the other. The strong side light from the window was full on his face, and Edith noticed how deep the lines were as his features puckered in preoccupation.

"There is a dislocation,—and I think a fracture, Hope," he said at length. "You must go to the hospital at once. I will go out and telephone for the ambulance. Then you can be near the boy,"—he added craftily.

The sweet face brightened. "Very well,—we are in your hands, Amos,—and I know that you will do all that man can do,—for the sake of the old happy days——" She sighed and her head fell back on the pillow.

Edith turned to Amos. "Perhaps I had better go," she said.

"If you must,—but she will have to be helped on with some of her clothes, and Mrs. Dougan——"

"Shure I kin do it all mesilf," said the woman somewhat harshly.

Amos looked up in surprise. Vaguely he felt that there was something amiss. Edith, with an effort, walked back to the bed and picked up her fan. Her back was turned to him, as he stood deep in thought with one hand on the rickety table. Mrs. Dougan was beside him. He turned to her covertly.

"Has she said anything about her husband?" he whispered.

Mrs. Dougan sniffed contemptuously. "The divil a wurrud has she said av him,—the baste!" she answered aloud in a rough voice; "but"—pointedly—"I do be havin' me——"

"Keep quiet!" he whispered. The fan fluttered more quickly.

Amos opened his grip and took out some of the bandages. As he did so, he noticed that there were several other packages strewn around the room, some of them not yet opened. He had already seen that the linen on the bed was fresh, and of a quality not usually found in houses of that character. On the corner of one of the sheets was printed the word "Carter."

"I will go down and telephone for an ambulance," he said after a moment.

There was no reply.

As he felt his way down the rickety stairs, he wondered at the change that had come over the two women. At first he was inclined to ascribe it to the pathos of the scene; then suddenly he got an inspiration.

Could it be that Mrs. Dougan, with the garrulousness of her kind, had given Edith to distinctly understand that Hope was of the vast army of—— Ah, no! the idea was unworthy of Edith. Her heart was too big, and her sympathy too broad to let *that* warp it. When he came he had been satisfied that she did not guess at the identity of the man, and Hope had said nothing to indicate it. Yet his experience had shown him that women of the kindest hearts were unaccountably hard, where one of their sex who had fallen was concerned.

Now he understood what it was in the expression

and the eyes of the child that had so haunted him. It was the marvelous resemblance to Ellsworth! But surely, she could not have seen that. No,—as far as Edith was concerned, it was simply the pathos of the whole affair, coupled to what she might imagine of the woman's past,—and as far as Mrs. Dougan was concerned, he neither knew nor cared.

Then he wondered at the beauty which Hope's suffering had given her. She had grown into a gloriously beautiful woman, a Titian type,—a queen whose crown had been trampled in the mire, and he swore that the bereavement which had just crushed her heart should be the means of reclaiming her to her kind. She was free now, and while he could not tell how much of her past might be known, he inwardly vowed that if her future life was ruined, it would not be from lack of effort on his part to save it.

As he stepped out into the street in search of the nearest place from which to call up the hospital, a flashy-looking man who was lounging against a stoop across the street walked up and intercepted him.

"What's yer hurry, frien'?" he asked in rather a truculent voice.

Amos stared at him for a moment in amazement, then his brows lowered. He was in no mood for interruption just at that moment.

"Clear out!" he growled without slackening his pace.

The man kept abreast of him.

"Not so fas', me frien'. I want you to take a little walk with me."

Though boiling with rage, Amos was puzzled. The man's air was offensively confident.

"What d'ye want?" he demanded, pulling up. "Quick now, I'm in a hurry!"

"Don't doubt it a particle. That Tenth Street ferry boat won't wait all day," replied the man with an impudent leer.

Amos was dumfounded, but his patience was at an end. He swung on his heel to proceed, when the man laid a hand on his sleeve.

Like a flash Amos's arm flew out, and the man, who was no featherweight, spun around in his tracks, and sprawled across the pavement. In an instant he was on his feet again, and had whipped a revolver from his pocket. There was an ugly cut where Amos's hard knuckles had met his brow.

"Hands up," he yelled, and covered Amos with the pistol.

Amos was no fool, and he knew when the other man had the drop. The man was evidently a detective. His arrest was another case of mistaken identity.

"If you're an officer, why in blazes didn't you show your badge?" he exclaimed, as he held his hands shoulder high.

The commotion had brought a policeman who was hovering near as pre-arranged.

"Officer," said Amos, "I surrender to you. This man has shown me no authority. Tell the fool to put up that gun. First thing he knows it 'll go off and hit one of these kids!"

The policeman was at first inclined to get in a little artistic work with the club, but having a Celtic sense of humor, and being secretly delighted at the rough treatment of the "plain-clothes man," contented himself by grabbing Amos roughly by the shoulder, and

admonishing him to "come along aisy" or he'd "bate in his crust."

"All right," said Amos, "but let me send in an ambulance call first."

This was intended seriously, but the policeman taking it as a bit of a joke at the expense of the detective, smiled broadly, whereat Amos, thinking that the request was useless, gave it up and proceeded at the head of a gradually growing procession.

It was not far to the station-house, but when they arrived, the captain was engaged, and Amos spent a fuming ten minutes waiting. Finally, he was led up to the desk.

"Good-afternoon, Captain Dougherty," he remarked placidly.

The captain was struck with consternation.

"Heavens and earth, Doctor,—what are you doing here?"

"I pass,—that's one thing I came here to find out. Of course there were other reasons," he added with a grin.

The detective was evidently very much embarrassed, and the captain was quick to notice it.

"What's the charge?" he demanded gruffly.

"Suspicious character,—suspected of having stolen goods in his possession and——"

"Who lodged the information?"

"I—I—I'm not quite——"

"Well,—spit it out,—or don't you know?"

"Patrolman Phelan of the —th precinct told me to——"

"To go and make a damn fool of yourself,—which was a cinch for you, eh?"

Amos laughed outright. If it had not been for the annoyance of the delay, the situation would have given him infinite joy. During his term of senior interne at the hospital he had made countless police calls on the ambulance to this particular station-house, and was well known to Captain Dougherty and most of the patrolmen in the precinct. It just happened that the officer who had assisted at his arrest was a new man, or the chances are that he would have been released at once.

The captain turned to him. "That's all right, Doctor,—you're dismissed!"

Amos thanked him, and hurried out, first having sent in a sick-call from the station-house.

When he reached "Murphy's Row," he noticed that the cab was not there. He dove into the alley, and tore up the rickety stairs with most reckless haste. Mrs. Dougan was still with the patient, who was dressed and resting quietly.

"Has Miss Carter gone?" he demanded.

"She has."

Amos made no remark, but set about immobilizing the shoulder as well as he could. He was rather piqued at the girl's sudden departure, even though acknowledging that there was no further reason for her staying. As it was growing late, he decided not to attempt to reduce the dislocation until the patient reached the hospital,—especially as the operation might require an anæsthetic and more appliances than he had at hand.

Almost as he had finished, he heard heavy steps ascending the stairs and an instant later Dr. Barton, his junior interne, entered the room, followed by a couple

of policemen. Juniors are not as a rule supposed to "ride 'bus," but a sick call is different from an accident case. He seemed rather surprised to find Amos.

"Hello, Amos,—what's up?"

"Patient's shoulder's out of commission. She's an old friend of mine and I want to send her in," he answered rather shortly.

Barton glanced around the room and his eyebrows lifted. Then, as he saw Hope, he checked a short, low whistle of surprise.

Amos for the first time felt a trifle ill at ease, although he could not have told exactly why.

He walked over to the bed.

"Good-by for the present, Hope. I'll see you a little later at the hospital."

"All right, Amos," she answered,—"and thank you. You are going right back to look after my baby?"

The two policemen looked at one another in silence,—then inquiringly at Mrs. Dougan, who shook her head.

CHAPTER XVI

ELLSWORTH SIGNALS

IT is doubtful if in the pain of the process, Hope noticed the expression on Edith Carter's face as she helped Mrs. Dougan prepare the patient for her trip to the hospital. Mrs. Dougan noticed, and with her Celtic shrewdness, forbore any further comment, for the look was that which the face of every untried girl must sometimes wear at the first staggering blow to her faith in human kind.

It took but a few minutes to clothe Hope in a manner befitting the ambulance, and then both women sat down and awaited in silence the return of Amos. Edith resumed her place by the patient's bedside, fanning her gently, and staring out over the house-tops, while in her mind she tried to deduct a logical answer to the events connected with the woman at her side.

Taken successively, the striking points were, the strange expression of Amos's face as he had first seen the pitiful child, the doubtful history of the mother, the stealthy manner in which Amos had obtained the address, and gone as soon as possible to see her, his apparent consternation at finding Edith there and his first question as to how long she had been there, and then the shock and mutual recognition of his meeting with Mrs. Lowell. Her heart gave a throb that angered her, as she remembered their evident famili-

arity, and Mrs. Lowell's reference to the "old happy days."

But the hardest thing of all to explain away was Amos's questioning of Mrs. Dougan, which no ears but those not wishing to hear could have caught, as to whether the patient had made any reference to her husband, and the rough way in which he had silenced the Irishwoman when she replied with no effort at secrecy. Added to this, were the very evident, and all but expressed, suspicions of the Irishwoman, and the sudden change in her manner toward the doctor.

Ungallant as it may sound, most men would have seen the weak points of the prosecution at once,—or, at any rate, some strong points in the defense. It is a fact that a woman seldom considers both sides of a chain of circumstantial evidence. Edith's instinct had told her from the first that the baby in the hospital had awakened some strong emotion in Amos, and the moment that he had entered the room she had felt the bond of sympathy which the tone of his voice, as he had pronounced the woman's name, had proved. If at this point she had remained true to her intuition, and had not fallen back upon her powers of analysis, she would have been speedily convinced that the sympathy was not such as the sequence of events had seemed to indicate.

What further warped her clearer reason was the stinging pain which it had given her,—and which it was useless to deny. It was more than the resentment and deep regret which one might feel as a result of an unexpected blow to one's confidence and affection for a dear and trusted friend. It was a pain so intense as to be almost physical; a pain which suffo-

cated her, and made the impulse to cry out, "Tell me quickly,—at once,—what has this woman ever been to you?" almost irresistible.

Oh,—she could not endure it another second,—she must get away!—out in the open air! For the first time, she felt herself drooping under the stifling atmosphere of the wretched garret. She arose abruptly to her feet.

"I must go now. Dr. Knapp will see that you have everything that you need. Mrs. Dougan, you may keep any of these things that Mrs. Lowell does not need,—and come and see me to-morrow,—you have the address?"

Hope turned toward her languidly. She was beginning to feel the reaction of the sorrow, suffering, and excitement through which she had passed.

"I can never thank you enough, Miss Carter! It gives one new courage to be reminded that there are women like you in the world. God bless you,—and keep you from ever suffering as I have done!"

"Amin!" said Mrs. Dougan emphatically. "Shure, 'tis an angil av mercy sint be the blissid Virgin y'are entoirely. I'll be afther showin' ye the way out."

Edith pressed Hope's hand without speaking, and hastened to the door.

"Moind yersilf, darlint,—'tis darruk as the pit!"

She made the precarious journey to the cab in safety, and told the driver to go home at once. As she jolted along over the poorly paved streets, the sordid sights on every side awakened a sadly different feeling from that which she had on coming down. Out of the chaos of emotions stood, conspicuous, disgust. Disgust of the district; the people; mankind in general;

Hope; herself, and that was the bitterest disgust of all. She felt that as a moralist, a philosopher, a true Christian, in all its sense of broad charity, she should have been above her present state of heart. Now, because some of the shadow of sin had crept into her own life, she was brought down to the level of all of these others. She felt bruised; humiliated; ashamed.

When Edith reached home, she found that her father had not yet come in, and just as she was about to dress for dinner, a messenger boy arrived with a note, saying that the major had "met up" with some old friends, and as it did not seem quite right to bring them all in to dinner unawares, he had taken them to his club.

Edith was disappointed when she read the note, as she dreaded the idea of spending the evening alone with her thoughts, but her sympathy went out to the club when she noticed the names of two of her father's guests.

The result was that she made a simple toilet, and sat down to dine alone. Before she had been there long, the postman's whistle shrieked at the door, and directly the maid entered with two or three letters and a square package which appeared to be a book.

She glanced idly over the letters, that contained nothing which might prove diverting, and then rather curiously picked up the package. It was a book. She turned it over in her hands, looking for a good point of attack on the wrapper, and noticed as she did so that it had come directly from the publishers.

Having teased her curiosity a bit she opened the wrapper; glanced for an instant at the cover and binding, and as she exposed the title page, a slip bearing

the compliments of the author slipped out and dropped upon the floor. It dropped unheeded, for her heart had given a tremendous bound, and her eyes were fixed upon the words: "The Probationer. A Novel. By Douglas Brooks Ellsworth."

The book was profusely illustrated by a prominent artist whom she knew to be a personal friend of Douglas's. As a man who knew Douglas well had once remarked, he was the worst "moral" one could conceive, as in spite of his well-known excesses, his circle of personal friends seemed rather to increase than to diminish. Almost all of Douglas's acquaintances were his friends; whether or not he was the friend of his acquaintances, was another question.

Edith turned back to the frontispiece in order to look through the illustrations consecutively and so to get as quick an idea as possible of the subject of the story. As she did so, a flush of anger came into her face, for she recognized the picture as the scene of a former interview with Ellsworth.

The delineation of the girl on the other side of the room was somewhat vague, but the figure of a man, standing in the foreground, was undeniably that of Douglas. His face was partly turned away, but the poise of the small aristocratic head, the expression of the broad shoulders, and the graceful sweep of the back made the whole familiar pose so characteristic as to be almost startling. Even the words beneath the illustration were the same: "You must remember that the qualities you hate in me are only an exaggeration of the ones you admire."

It was too much. Was nothing sacred from the artistic vivisection of this man? Would he not always

so immolate his Lares and Penates on the altar of his art? Then a quick idea seized her, and she ruthlessly bent back the binding of the book at the dedication page. Yes,—just as she had supposed,—another pose, for in small and modest type was inscribed simply: "To E. M. C.";—her initials.

She began to understand. He would have her believe that he had written the book only for her,—and then offered three thousand copies for public sale, with no limit to those that might follow should it jump with the popular fancy.

Well,—she would read it through,—that night. And then she would write to the gentleman,—and she doubted if the letter would be the most gratifying item of the gate receipts.

Settling comfortably into the pillows, she began to read,—slowly, carefully, and with all of the analysis that she could bring to bear. One by one she read the illustrations down, glancing at them curiously, as one might look at old photographs of past but not forgotten incidents. Before long, the analytical mood had faded, and she read on and on with a gradually absorbing interest. Here and there she recognized herself, so subtly disguised as to be impersonal; herself as she had pictured all that she would be, standing forth purely and strongly with no other support than the womanly traits of character that she had so often longed to claim. It was not a cloak of vanity and flattery; it was rather a mold of an almost perfect womanhood, which she but seemed to touch in places,—an ideal,—and weirdly enough, her own. Had she stopped to consider, the author's perfect knowledge of her dreams would have filled her with a sort of

fear, but the personality of the heroine was soon lost in her sympathy for the central figure,—the hero.

This was Douglas,—her Douglas as she had pictured him in her fondest dreams,—as she had always felt that he could be if he only would, and now *knew* that he could be, for was the character not of his creation? Vices he had, to be sure,—but lovable ones, and his virtues were God-given; and she began to understand, as she read on and on, how Titanesque the overcoming of these vices, until partly spent in reaching an immunity, would be. Vices of the imagination are so impalpable,—so elusive,—so hard to grapple. If this hero had stopped to quell these vices his life would have been negative; he would have had no strength left with which to do his deeds. His sins would all have been of omission; he might as well have been a cloistered monk,—or an imbecile. Like the overcareful surgeon who stops to ligature every little bleeding point as it opens under the hurrying knife, the operation might be bloodless,—but would it have been finished?—could the malignant growth have been extirpated in the allotted time?

In the story, the hero was stopping to gather up all of these little bleeding vessels,—tying off all of these little loose ends with exasperating patience, never seeming to consider how the precious time was slipping past. She felt like screaming at him to hasten on,—to let the details go, until secure, with both feet planted on his opportunities, he might grapple with them in a body.

A cab rattled noisily up to the door, and the girl, glancing at the clock, started to her feet as she saw that it was almost two o'clock. Her father must be

just returning from his club. Edith knew but little of the major's late home-comings, and what little she did know did not make her any the more anxious to acquire further enlightenment, but she *did* know the Virginia gentlemen whom he had been entertaining. She fled swiftly up the stairs, and just as she reached the upper landing she heard the major's latchkey assaulting the varnish on either side of the keyhole. To-morrow morning her father would be rather reticent, and at breakfast—which he had never yet missed—would probably break into a tirade against "these damned Yankee politicians." Possibly, also, the bromo-seltzer bottle might be left standing on the breakfast table. But to remain up till long after the hour for the retirement of all wise virgins would be to take an unfair advantage which would be resented as such. Hence her flight.

She dropped a heavy portière over her transom and began to undress. As she did so, the major tacked blithely down the hall with ostentatious and noisy quiet.

Slipping on her dressing gown, the girl stretched out on her bed to finish the book, but the thread of the narrative had been interrupted, and before going on she thought over what she had read.

The character of the heroine was flawless,—too flawless, from a literary point of view. That was the part which would receive the roughest handling from the critics, and the most approval from the feminine reading public, who would complacently accept the character as coinciding with their own. Fortunately for Ellsworth, Edith was a woman and not a critic,—and other women would condemn the critics, and buy the

book! To a woman with a fair equilibrium of mind and heart, the position of the hero was indescribably pathetic, as his whole life and prospects were being ruined by his slavish devotion to the woman that he loved. One felt irritated with the heroine,—because she was so hopelessly good that it needed an angel to love her consistently, and the poor hero was very far from being such.

In the end, the heroine grew out of patience with the hero, because she had so cramped his resource that he could not accomplish anything, and through a gradual estrangement, she finally transferred her affections to a man who needed less fame and more high moral influence.

To Edith, the whole book seemed to be the indescribably pathetic protest of a wonderfully grand and passionate nature against the trammels of conventionality intended for more mediocre minds. It was the stifling of a masterly intellect by an overmastering love, the most pathetic part of which was that, while all of the intention was for good, the final result was the smothering of a strong man's soul. Throughout, the idea and execution of the tale were masterly,—the romantic pose of the leading character, unequaled. The ultimate fate of the hero, his hopelessness, his loneliness, his past a constant manly struggle, his hope of the future gone, and then his decline and ultimate death, were so pathetic, that as she read it the tears flowed from her eyes. The artist had done much to enhance the heart-breaking sadness of the last chapter, for he had skillfully emaciated the features of the hero, —Ellsworth,—and put in the eyes a look of yearning. The greatest triumph of the whole book, artistically,

was that the reader laid it down without realizing the fact that it was one of the most immoral stories ever written; immoral, not in the ordinary vulgar meaning of the word, but because the result of every good, pure, clean, honest effort, on the part of almost every character, resulted to his worst interests.

When the girl had finished reading, the dawn was struggling against the darkness, and from the streets there came the sigh of the awakening city.

She took her lover's picture from her mantle, gazed at it with eyes into which the morning mists had stolen, then, still holding it, crept softly into bed.

CHAPTER XVII

CROSS-BEARINGS

AMOS rode back to the hospital on the ambulance with Barton. After seeing Hope comfortably provided for, he went down to the children's ward to see the baby. A brief examination satisfied him that it would not live through the night. He went sadly back to the "Woman's Surgical," which was now quiet, the visitors having all departed.

"I will take the history of this case," he said to the head nurse. "Dr. Barton is busy——"

The nurse nodded assent, and resumed her seat by the table, but as Amos turned away she slightly raised her eyebrows. When she had gone down to report the case but a few minutes before, she had caught a glimpse of Dr. Barton "busy" with a game of checkers in the surgeon's parlor, and it was not the custom of the "House" to take histories. Already some of the odd features in regard to the case had reached the nurse's ears. She had also observed how the patient's eyes had followed the doctor from the moment that he entered the ward, and her apparent impatience to have him go to her, from all of which the nurse, being alert and observant, as became her position, made her own deductions.

A city hospital vibrates with other than its intrinsic pulses. It is a clinical thermometer which registers

the feverish conditions without, and indicates much of the flood and ebb of the life and passions of the great city beyond its walls. The result is that the inmates, though somewhat cloistered, grow very wise. It is a wisdom quite different from that vouchsafed to many who rotate in a far wider orbit, for it is a wisdom acquired through more than the translation of a single sense. It comes not from reproductions of print or picture or the conversations of the ones who have seen and done. It is brought home by induction; by the atmosphere of the corridors, and of the wards. World-wisdom of this sort is a boon to mankind when vested in the pure and charitable of heart; a dangerous weapon to society when possessed by the malicious.

Amos was no better than his associates in the hospital in any way except that he was a little richer in knowledge of this kind, and that was what was like to be his bane. He was so intent on trying to do what seemed to him to be the only decent thing, that he never thought of the construction that others might put upon his efforts. The nurse, who thought that she knew it all, watched wisely, and from a distance.

Amos drew a chair up to the side of the cot, and unhooking the chart leaves from the wall beside him, laid the sheets across his knees. Hope lay on her uninjured side, her head slightly raised from the pillow and supported by one hand, her eyes wide and yearning.

"How is he, Amos,—better?"

"He is about the same," Amos answered gently, "but if he gets well he will be a helpless cripple all of his life."

She dropped her face in the elbow of her rounded arm, and for a few minutes was silent.

Suddenly she raised her head. Her eyes were wild but dry.

"It would be almost better for him if he should die!" she whispered.

Amos nodded his head in assent.

"Listen, Hope," he said presently, "don't think that I am heartless, but as one of your old friends—and the friend of your father—I want to ask you some questions. May I?"

She shrank a little, while her color came and went. Then her breath came deep.

"Yes, Amos."

"Who is the father of the child, Hope,—Douglas?"

The clear eyes looked straight into his.

"Yes."

"Were you ever married to him, Hope?"

"No, Amos,—but he has promised all along that we should be married as soon as his affairs are improved, —and I know that he will keep his promise.—I love him so! There is no one like him in the whole wide world."

"Mighty few, thank the Lord," thought Amos to himself.

"Does your father know,—about the child?" he continued.

"Oh, no,—I could never bear to tell him,—he could not understand, and it would break his heart!"

"How long have you been in New York?"

"About a year and a half. I simply couldn't live without seeing Douglas, so I accepted a situation that was offered me as governess here in New York. Then I had to——"

"Had to leave," interrupted Amos harshly. "What did you do then, Hope?"

A look of infinite tenderness crept into the beautiful eyes.

"Douglas took care of me. We had a little home of our own in an apartment house uptown, and he was so sweet and tender. Oh, it was heaven, until,—until,—he wanted me to—— Oh, a man can never understand, Amos,—but——"

"And you refused," interrupted Amos in an even voice.

"Yes, Amos,—perhaps I should have done as he wished,—but I loved him so!—and I knew how I should love his child, and have it always near me, even when I could not have him! Then we,—we—quarreled,—or at least he was very angry,—and so cruel——" The big eyes flowed over. "But he didn't mean to be,—only you know how quick-tempered he is. They say that it is always that way with geniuses and tremendously talented people. And Douglas is *so* talented!"

"Undoubtedly. And what happened then?"

"Well,—he went away angry,—and then he was taken sick, you know, and had to go right out to California to save his life. You know the doctors said that another week in this climate might have killed him. I got a letter from him after he had left, inclosing me some money,"—she was blushing furiously now,—"for I was unable to do any work at all. It was the dearest, sweetest, truest letter, and in it he told me how he had always loved me, and always would love nobody but me, and that he owed it to his love to save his life to devote to me. He had been to see me, he said, but I

was out, and then he was taken ill again and couldn't leave the house except to go right to the train. Then as the months passed I ran out of money, and,—and had to give up my apartment."

"Why, in Heaven's name, didn't you write to me? You knew where I was?"

She seemed confused, and cast down her eyes. "I wanted to, but he had made me,—that is, I had once promised him that,—that——"

"That you would suffer h—that is, that you wouldn't?"

"Yes," she answered simply, with a slightly troubled look. "If anyone had known, it might have done Douglas so much harm."

"And your father?"

"He is still in Shoal Harbor,—and he thinks that I am still teaching. He writes to me quite often, and the letters are forwarded to me."

"Have you heard from Douglas lately?"

"No, and that troubles me. Do you think that he is all right?"

"Yes,—he's all right enough. Probably they have not forwarded his letters."

"Oh,—have you heard from him?—and he is better?"

"Yes,—almost well. He will be back before long, I imagine."

"Oh, Amos—will he really?"

"He ought to; but how did you drift down into Murphy's Row?"

Her face grew scarlet.

"I did some needlework,—just a little, but it brought me about three dollars a week. I had to live,

so Mrs. Dougan, who did scrubbing in the house, got me a little room over hers. You saw what it was like; but the rent was only a dollar a week."

"Why didn't you write to your father and tell him that you were ill and needed some money?"

Hope flushed. "Because I knew that if I did that, he would come to me," she answered in a low voice. "I was in constant fear of that as it was, and every time I wrote, I told him that I was coming home on a visit very soon."

Amos was quiet for a while.

"Hope," he began after a time, "the sorrow that has come to you now, in the accident to your child, seems to me to be the course taken by Providence to restore you to your kind. You must be brave, child, and try to be as happy as you can in your memories—they can never be taken from you. The baby is asleep now,—and I am afraid he will never wake to suffer any more."

She gave a low cry of pain,—the mother's cry; such a cry as a tigress might give when she returned from her foraging to find her brood slain by a marauding wolf. It was almost savage in its intensity of grief.

"Amos,—I *must* see him!"

"No, Hope,—it is better not. Will you leave it all to me, child?"

"Oh, Amos!" She buried her face in the pillows and her body was shaken with silent sobbing.

Amos picked up the chart and hurriedly dashed off a brief history of the case from its surgical aspect. Then he leaned over and clasped her hand gently in his.

"I must go now, Hope,—and see, child,—you are

here under your maiden name. No one need know anything of the past except ourselves. I will see you again this evening."

He rose to his feet, and walked quietly out of the ward.

When his footsteps had died away in the corridor, the nurse stole over to the bed, and took down the chart. She glanced at it for a moment, then stole a curious look at the patient, whose head was buried in the pillow, and returned to her seat by the table.

After dinner Amos came into the ward. Hope was sleeping. He looked at her for a moment in silence; half turned, and listened to the night nurse's assurance that all was well, and went noiselessly out again. Returning to his room, he picked up a disreputable-looking pipe, and took a few deep, soul-satisfying puffs; then, laying it down abruptly, he slipped on his coat and hat, and twenty minutes later was standing at Dr. Couteau's door.

It was late when he came out, and there was a tired droop to the big features, for the day had been a hard one, but there was a triumphant accent in his step as he turned his face uptown, and with long and vigorous strides returned to his anxious vigil of the maimed and the halt and the blind.

CHAPTER XVIII

COUTEAU AT THE WHEEL

TWO weeks later Dr. Couteau, while his daily rounds, discovered that H sufficiently recovered from her acci make her further retention in the hospital ranted. From the harsh expression of his f and his somewhat rough manipulation of the arm, as he swung and rotated it on all sides, a observer might have imagined that the fact wa annoying to him,—and in a measure it was, as i sitated the immediate fulfillment of a made two weeks before to his house surgeon Knapp.

His subsequent rounds were somewhat c and on their completion an orderly was sent f the nurses' superintendent, carrying the "Vis compliments, and the unprecedented request be granted a few minutes' interview.

Miss Marvel, superintendent of the T School, was scanning a batch of communicatio sundry fair applicants who felt that they had sions," and were desirous of leaving their, i cases, luxurious homes for the blessed privi scrubbing lavatory floors, and wiping the ename cots, for such is the inglorious occupation of th batione." When the breathless orderly arrive

orderlies sent by Dr. Couteau were in the habit of arriving at the end of their errands with their blood somewhat under-oxygenated,—Miss Marvel was naturally annoyed, but the annoyance gave place to anxiety when the unexpected message was delivered.

In her usual unruffled manner, she received the communication, and returned her compliments to Dr. Couteau, with the gracious request that he wait upon her in her office as soon as convenient. When the orderly went shuffling down the corridor, she puckered her pretty brows,—for although of middle age Miss Marvel would still retain for many years the winsome face and tall graceful figure that during her course had made her the belle of the Training School,—and tried to imagine the cause of the irregularity. Had some wolf in doctor's clothing found its way into her dove-cote,—or had some of her ewe-lambs wandered from the fold? Possibly some one of her charges had been guilty of an impertinence to the "Attending." But no: Dr. Couteau was not the one to tattle about disrespect. The nurse would be the one to complain weepingly of the reproof which would in that case be forthcoming. Miss Marvel's eyes sparkled with amusement as she imagined the result of a pertness to the keen-witted surgeon, and of the figure which the offending nurse would be apt to cut for a few minutes after such a breach of discipline.

Dr. Couteau was a favorite with the superintendent, as are all kind-hearted, ugly, masculine men, with truly womanly women. Then she happened to think of his unusual courtliness of the past two weeks when they had chanced to meet; a tinge of color crept into her cheeks and was somewhat heightened by the sound of a

man's step outside. But the step passed, and with some annoyance Miss Marvel recovered her perfect composure. This was not difficult, as she possessed to a marked degree the poise so indispensable to those in executive positions, and usually found in people who have much to do with the nervous and hysterical,—possibly because they would not be in such a position long without it.

Another step, this time unmistakable, sounded outside the door, and was followed by a rap, uncharacteristic in its timidity. Just now the surgeon felt that he was not "on his own quarter-deck."

"Come in," he heard in a dulcetly discomposing tone. Dr. Couteau had really a very warm sentiment for the pretty superintendent.

The doctor entered the room with rather more than his usual brusqueness of manner, which, while it may have deceived himself, failed to blind the experienced eyes that were watching him. He was embarrassed. This knowledge gave the superintendent the whip-hand.

"Good-afternoon, Dr. Couteau," she said pleasantly.

"Good-afternoon, Miss Marvel." His eye fell on the batch of correspondence by her side; "hard at work as usual, I see. Do you ever have any play time?"

"Yes, indeed,—I am going to hear 'La Tosca,' this very night. 'People in glass houses,' you know.—When do you get *your* recreation? In the operating room, I suppose."

"I'm saving mine up. The harness *does* gall a little now and then, and one of these fine days I'm going to take the bits in my teeth and run away to Europe and

stay until the people in this old town have forgotten that I have ever done any surgery."

"You would have to stay many hundred years, I am afraid," she answered, with a smile.

"Well,—perhaps I will. I am getting on, Miss Marvel. I find that I can't do the work I could twenty years ago."

He walked across to the window, and stood for a moment looking out on the paved court below. The ambulance had just come in, and as he looked down he could see the orderlies from the accident ward carrying in a prone form upon the stretcher. The north light struck his rugged face from above, and as she looked at him, the superintendent was shocked to see how much he had really aged in the last few years. She thought of what the hospital would be without this strong, skillful, kindly man, and the idea gave her a quick stab of pain.

"Nonsense," she answered briskly,—"everyone is a little relaxed just at this season. When I got up this morning, I looked and felt and was firmly convinced that I was at least one hundred years old, and that at least eighty of them had been spent within these four walls!"

Dr. Couteau turned to her abruptly.

"How long have you been here?" he asked.

"What an embarrassing question! It will be twenty years this summer!"

"Quite a while, isn't it,—I rank you by about five years, not including my term of service as an interne, but what I exceed in years you have more than doubled in constant devotion to your duty. I suppose I must seem to you like a part of the building itself."

"Yes,—like that particular fragment, for instance." She stepped to his side, and pointed through the open window to one of the straight, heavy pillars that upheld the firmest part of the old "Administration Building."

The graceful compliment was not lost upon him, and for an instant the bushy brows relaxed. He turned to her so suddenly that she was almost startled.

"Did you ever know me to ask a favor in all of that time?"

Her face wore a look of surprise. "Why,—no,—I can't say that I have." She smiled. "As I recall, your occasional requests have never quite taken that form."

"Exactly. Well, I am going to ask one now,—of you. You needn't grant it if you don't want to." He turned toward her, resting one elbow on the window sill. "I want to ask you to admit a woman in whom I am interested, as a probationer in the Training School."

Miss Marvel raised her aristocratic eyebrows in surprise.

"Why, surely, that's no great favor to ask, Dr. Couteau. Certainly any young woman having the necessary education and whose character is indorsed by your recommen——"

The surgeon raised his hand inhibitingly. "Tut, tut, tut,—that's just where the favor comes in. I *don't* recommend her moral character as far as the past is concerned,—but I am willing to go on her bond for the future. Now see here, Miss Marvel,—don't look so impossible! This girl is the daughter of a country clergyman,—they always are,—I don't know

how the modern villain could get along if it wasn't for the daughters of rural dominies,—and she is exceedingly well educated,—although not as wise as she might have been. It was the same old story;—she fell in love with some accomplished scoundrel who accomplished her ruin. Now it's a choice between reclaiming her, or letting her strike adrift to land almost anywhere."

Miss Marvel's fine features wore an expression of polite regret.

"Of course those things are to be tremendously regretted, Dr. Couteau,—but the object of the Training School is not to reclaim wayward women."

"But,—oh!"—the doctor turned a close corner to avoid ripping out a helpless "damn it all!"—"this is quite an exceptional case. The girl is well connected, and visits at the homes of some of the best New England families. Her father is a fine old gentleman, and knows absolutely nothing of her trouble, but thinks that she is teaching as a governess, here in New York. In fact, no one knows her history for the past year, and no one need know it. She has had a child, but the child is now dead,—and that blow almost killed her, for it was her devotion to the baby that lost her the protection of the scoundrel who had promised to marry her, and finally led to her utter destitution. It seems to me that when we encounter a case like this, it is our plain duty to hold out a helping hand, Miss Marvel."

The superintendent's face had assumed an expression of polite concern. "That is quite a different matter, Dr. Couteau, from allowing the unfortunate person to associate with the young ladies of unblemished

character who may be under one's charge. I am perfectly willing,—in fact, would be delighted, to do anything within my power to assist this woman,—but to take her into the school——"

"Look here, Miss Marvel,—would you be willing to give a few minutes of your time to talk to her and size her up for yourself? If you do, and are not satisfied that she will be a credit to your school, why, I'll promise to strike out my application."

Miss Marvel pondered for a moment. "Why, certainly, Dr. Couteau,—I am perfectly willing to see her,—but it would be wrong of me to encourage your idea that I might take her into the school. Where is she now?"

"In Ward D."

The light of comprehension shone in the eyes of the superintendent.

"Oh,—that yellow-haired girl in the middle of the ward?"

"The same."

Miss Marvel toyed with the end of her fountain-pen. "She is an old acquaintance of Dr. Knapp's, I believe,—calls him 'Amos,' does she not?" She tapped the end of the pen against her lips.

"Yes,—in fact, I am interceding for her partly at his request. But your knowledge of humankind is too complete to allow you to be biased by that, Miss Marvel. Do you suppose that Dr. Knapp would have insisted upon having her brought to *this* hospital, and have been so perfectly free and open in his association with her since she has been in the ward, if his interest in her was not entirely aboveboard? No,—he used to board at her father's house during his vacations,

when he was in college, and all of the trouble came through a classmate of his whom he introduced into the home; consequently, Dr. Knapp feels in a way responsible for the trouble that has come to the girl."

Miss Marvel tapped the table pensively and with puckered brows. She had been distinctly impressed by the sweet open face of the golden-haired woman whom she had seen in the ward from day to day. Besides, she was not a little touched by the clumsy chivalry of these two men, whom she trusted and admired more than any who had connection with the hospital.

She turned to the surgeon. "Send her to me, please," she said simply. "I will see what can be arranged,—but remember,—I make no promises."

The doctor rose and bowed in the old courtly fashion which was of itself a compliment.

"There is all the promise that I wish in the knowledge of your kind heart, Miss Marvel,—and——" He paused. "May I ask you to remember that it is the first and only favor that Dr. Couteau has ever asked?"

He bowed again, and closed the door behind him softly.

The interview over, the doctor repaired with somewhat feverish haste to the room of his house surgeon, for after the unaccustomed self-abasement of the past few moments, he felt that he must work it off on somebody or burst. Fortune favored him, for he found Amos, who had about half an hour's respite at this particular time of the day, comfortably reclining on his bed, with a succulent cigar of noxious aroma between his teeth, and a handful of light literature before

his eyes, which should have been boring deep into the calfskin-covered.

Dr. Couteau emitted such a howl of savage exultation as a painted savage might give as he springs upon his unsuspecting foe.

"So this is the way my house staff attend to their duties, is it? Stretched out like a—hobo on a May day,—and burning a filthy weed that 'd put a soap factory out of business! Holy C-C-Chr-r-ristopher!! and the wards chock-a-block with crips that I doubt a damn one of ye have seen! Great——"

At the first trumpet of rage, Amos's big frame had given a startled leap on the bed with the result that the light and by no means flawless frame had parted at the head, dropping him easily but far from gracefully to the floor, the mattress under him of course, and his long legs waving frantically in the air, as he vainly attempted to extricate himself. As he gyrated, he could hear the other members of the staff fleeing swiftly down the corridor, for the hour was one of general relaxation, and while enjoying the comfort of their couches, the war-cry of the enemy had rung down the vaulted corridor.

Another Titanic struggle of Amos's carried away the lower end of the bed, so that the whole structure landed on the floor with a crash. At this the fury of the surgeon rose to a crescendo.

"*J-J-Je-rusalem* the Golden! That's right, smash *hell* out of the hospital furniture! Go ahead,—break the damn place up and chuck it out the window,—you're almost through with it! Twenty-seven years have I sucked in the smells of this hospital, but never, *never,* mind you, have I ever come in here at five in the

afternoon and found all hands in bed! This service is certainly going to the devil,—d'ye hear?—to the *devil!*"

He paused, breathless, and glared at Amos, who had struggled to his feet and was standing pigeon-toed and with sunken chest, in an attitude of such deep dejection that the surgeon regarded him suspiciously. As a matter of fact Amos *was* dejected,—for it is not pleasant to listen to such discourse as was now delivered. His only consolation lay in meditating on what would shortly happen to the orderly in the other building for having neglected to ring the usual bell which warns the house staff of the advent of the "Attending."

"Brace up, you big lummix!" snapped the surgeon. "Why don't you wear your chest in front like a man! I suppose lying a-bed all the time sort of takes the starch out of you,—eh?" Suddenly his eye fell upon the book which Amos had been reading, and his rage broke out afresh.

"Reading a lot of sentimental poppy-cock too, upon my soul. I suppose there's nothing more for you to learn in the line of your profession,—eh? Now I find that *I* can learn something that I don't know about surgery almost every day by joggling my gray matter with a medical journal. *I* don't have much time to read the drivel of some literary fool that's too lazy to work for a living! But I suppose you've got the whole thing stowed in your upper hold, and——"

His sharp eye had suddenly fastened on the binding of the book, where in beautiful gold-leaf script were inscribed the words: "The Probationer." Considering the interview he had just been through, the coincidence

struck him as uncanny. Most brilliant men have their genius relieved with a fresco of superstition. Dr. Couteau snatched up the book, and turned to the title page.

"The Probationer. A Novel. By Douglas Brooks Ellsworth."

"Douglas Brooks Ellsworth!—Is that that drunken, slick-spoken dude that's engaged to Edith Carter?"

"Yes, sir?"

"And you lying here in bed reading the besotted ravings of his alcoholic intellect? Oh, you *make me sick!*"

This was the last straw. Dr. Couteau gave one loud snort of smothered rage; turned, and departed swiftly, lest the shortcomings of his house surgeon might tempt him to a personal violence.

After he had departed, Amos set about to repair his shattered nervous system,—and bed. About four times in the course of the year he was the target for an explosion of this character, so that he was in part inured, but this one had been of rather greater violence than usual.

He could not help laughing as he thought of the dignified manner in which he had dropped through the bed at the first onslaught, and he had by this time learned enough about Dr. Couteau to know that the incident would give him many a good laugh in the future.

The only really gratifying feature of the encounter lay in the assurance he felt that the surgeon had been successful in his mission with the superintendent. This assurance was confirmed, as far as Amos was concerned, when on going up to the ward shortly after-

wards, he learned that Dr. Couteau had sent Miss Stanley to see the nurse's superintendent, and that Miss Stanley had not yet returned.

Hope had not been in the hospital a week before she had become a favorite with the nurses, patients, doctors, and everyone in fact with whom she had come in contact. During the ride in the ambulance Amos had impressed upon both Hope and Barton, in whom he had later in part confided, that no one must know of her relation to the child, and that from the time of leaving Murphy's Row she was to be known only by her proper maiden name. The gossip first produced by the patient's intimacy with Amos was soon discredited by Hope's frank and honest manner, and her childlike simplicity and truthfulness.

Barton was a gentleman, and Amos's friend, so that as far as Amos could see, Hope's position in the hospital would be safe from reproach. He had many reasons for wishing to have her enter the Training School, the strongest of which was the worldly education that it would give her, and of which she stood so much in need for her own protection; also he wished her to have an independent means of livelihood against the time when she should discover that she had nothing to expect from Ellsworth. This idea was in Amos's mind when he had gone to see Dr. Couteau on the night of Hope's admission to the hospital.

The first night that Amos had discussed Hope's case with Dr. Couteau he had told him everything concerning her history except the name of Douglas Ellsworth. That he withheld, as it seemed to have no direct bearing on the case, and he felt that it would be a betrayal of confidence. Dr. Couteau had at first grumblingly

declined to mix himself up in the case, but after Amos had talked for a while about the Stanleys' home in Shoal Harbor, and drawn a vivid picture of the distress of the kindly old clergyman, little by little the surgeon relaxed, then became interested and finally most strenuous in his denunciation of the unknown scoundrel. When, a few days later, Amos had craftily suggested the Training School, Dr. Couteau promptly volunteered to see Miss Marvel.

That night, having temporarily buttressed his couch, Amos began his second reading of Ellsworth's book. The first time that he had read it through, he had been carried along by the story itself and influenced by the plausibility with which the writer's art had endowed his argument. When he finally finished the book he was in an atmosphere of sympathy with the hero which almost amounted to affection.

But the knowledge that this hero was Ellsworth, and the proof which he had that Ellsworth had been living with Hope Stanley and reiterating his promises of marriage to her, while at the same time assuring Edith Carter of his unwavering devotion, convinced Amos that any effort to believe in the later sincerity of the man was fatuous. Given this point of departure he was able to work out the writer's course by simple dead-reckoning.

Piece by piece he began to pick the whole fabric of the book to pieces as a sailor might unlay a complicated sennet with the point of a marline spike, and on a second careful reading the frail material used in its construction was raveled out under his keen analysis, laying bare the rottenness beneath.

He saw that the book had been written for *her;* that

its object was primarily to exculpate the innumerable lapses of the writer on the plea of the vagaries of genius. Not only did it offer plausible excuses for past transgressions, but it even paved the way for those of the future.

As the full comprehension of the guile of the whole affair slowly dawned upon Amos's brain, he was smitten with a sense akin to admiration, but this soon gave place to an emotion as near despair as he had ever allowed himself to entertain. Heretofore he had felt in some vague way that Edith Carter would never marry Douglas Ellsworth. Now for the first time he began to realize that the man's brilliant intellect might weave a web of such strength around the girl that even the positive knowledge of his baseness might not enable her to break away. A man who could write a book like that was no ordinary scoundrel. He was very apt to clog the mechanism of the wheel of destiny while being ground in the mill. Such an antagonist was not the one to gather up his slack and go out and hang himself in it.

Ellsworth, by every law, divine and human, belonged to Hope, and whether he ever married her or not, Amos registered a quiet vow that he should never while she still lived marry Edith Carter. To this end, such coercion as might prove necessary should be brought to bear upon the man.

Pondering these matters which an unkind Fate seemed to have placed in his hands for adjustment, Amos sought the repose invited by his broken bed.

CHAPTER XIX

AMOS STANDS WATCH

WHEN Amos at length graduated from the Puritan Hospital, much to his surprise Dr. Couteau gave a little dinner in his honor at the University Club.

The course at the hospital was for two years, and of that time Amos had spent eighteen months in constant surgical service, the greater part of which was under Dr. Couteau. The other six months' duty was on the medical side of the hospital.

Aside from the routine of the regular work, he had assisted his patron on an average of perhaps once a week, in private operations in and about the city. Amos was himself no judge of the skillfulness which he had acquired in this association, but Dr. Couteau had been watching him narrowly,—both in regard to his social and personal as well as professional development, and was forced to acknowledge to himself that at last he had found a man in whom he could put absolute reliance.

Little of this sentiment was apparent in his manner. Amos indeed had rather got the idea that his work was on the whole displeasing to the surgeon, and the feeling that probably his chief was keenly disappointed in him gave him many an unhappy hour. He could tell in five minutes' observation Dr. Couteau's real feeling

for anybody else, but when he tried to apply this perception to his own case it was an absolute failure.

The fact of Dr. Couteau's giving the dinner in his honor was the first practical evidence which Amos had had that the surgeon was really pleased with him, and his manner of expressing his gratification touched Amos deeply. When at about midnight they returned to the doctor's house, he had grown reticent again, but as they were entering the front door he turned to the younger man.

"Take this latch-key, Amos. I've got another upstairs,—this is to be your home from now on, you know. Come into the library for a few minutes. I want to talk with you."

They entered the library, where the surgeon lit a malignant-looking cigar, and threw himself back into a reclining chair. He burned away about half of his Havana in silence and with a few deep hungry inhalations. Then suddenly he began to talk, quietly and unemotionally.

"Amos,—you are at last off soundings; you've sailed out of the bay, dropped down the land behind the skyline, and are out on the broad ocean. You are no longer my apprentice,—I consider you now a colleague and entirely competent to navigate your own vessel."

"I shall always be glad of a chance to speak you and get latitude and longitude, Doctor," said Amos.

"Yes,—I think that you will,—in which regard you will differ from the majority of the younger members of the profession. But you won't have much opportunity, because,—I intend to go away."

Amos looked up anxiously. "Where are you going, Doctor?—Not for very long, I hope."

"To Europe; with the Carters when they go over in the spring. The truth is, my boy,—I am about to retire from active practice."

Amos leaped from the couch in horrified surprise.

"Oh, for the Lord's sake, Doctor,—don't do that! Retire if you like, but stay around these waters where we can see you once in a while!"

Dr. Couteau slowly shook his fine head. "No, Amos, I've got to get clean away,—off soundings. The truth is, Amos, that some of the promissory notes that I've given here and there on my capital of vitality are beginning to be presented for payment. It comes to all of us who have put in year after year of active surgical practice. I don't sleep, my boy. I can't rest. You yourself have been jumping me lately because I've got to substituting tobacco for food." He paused to light a fresh cigar.

Amos was conscious of an odd tightening about his throat.

"But for Heaven's sake, Doctor, don't speak as if it was so final. Why don't you run across for a few months and then come back here and go to some nice suburban place where there is a Casino and a band and a country club and some pretty women——"

Dr. Couteau interrupted with a short laugh.

"How long do you suppose they would let me stay in such a Utopia, Amos? Or how long do you suppose I *would* stay when there was work to do? No, Amos, I've got to get clean away." He took a few brisk steps up and down the length of the room.

"I've been wanting to quit for the last five years,

Amos, but I couldn't. Not that I hadn't money enough, because I have, but there was nobody to take my place; no one to whom I was willing to trust my patients; no one who was willing to put his shoulder beneath my load without adjusting it to suit himself. There are plenty of men of my age in the same position. People say that they are avaricious, and all that rot! It is simply that when a man has built up a fine profession, whether it be surgery or banking or dry-goods, he would rather peg along at it through his old age than put the result of his life's work in the hands of people in whom he has not absolute confidence. It's not the love of what can be got out of the work,—it's the love of the work itself!"

Amos, still struggling beneath the sense of desolation which the older man's words had produced, remained silent.

"I'll not be lonely, Amos," Dr. Couteau went on in a lighter tone. "I know lots of people over there, and when I get sick of it I will skip over here and slang you for a bit. In the meantime I'm going to gradually shove all of the work of this office over onto your broad shoulders. The change has got to be gradual so as not to jar the clientèle."

"Of course," said Amos slowly, "it's a grand opening for me and all of that, and I suppose I ought to be highly elated,—but I'm not."

"I know you're not, my boy, and I'm glad of it. Practice isn't everything. Nevertheless, business is business, and to-morrow we will get together and arrange a definite programme. However, there is no hurry about that."

For a few moments he sucked hungrily at his cigar,

his heavy brows pulled deep over his eyes. Amos, who knew his moods, was silent. When Dr. Couteau spoke again it was in a note of gentleness which was rare with him.

"As we are neither of us given to heart-to-heart talks, Amos, I might as well speak right now about another thing which is in my mind. Be careful, my boy, how you let a false idea of loyalty ruin the happiness of your whole life. I did it, and the woman on whose account I have gone through life alone married neither of us; married Hampton Carter, who, although a good enough man, never half appreciated her. Just now you are in danger of doing the same thing. Don't let it happen, Amos. Here am I with everything that our profession has to offer, and how much do you suppose I have got out of it all? Why, man, I'd give everything that I've got in the world, my fame, practice, and everything that goes with it, for one year—that I might have had!"

He dropped his chin and tugged thoughtfully at his wiry mustache. He never for a moment looked at Amos, who at his first words had straightened like an Indian at a sudden alarm and was sitting rigidly with a pale face and a set expression about his square jaws.

"Dr. Couteau," he said finally, "would you mind telling me how you guessed that Miss Carter,—that I——"

Dr. Couteau looked up sharply; then a smile lit up the keen old face.

"Upon my soul! How did I *guess* it? I didn't guess it. I *knew* it; have known it right along!—before you did, I expect. We must have eyes in our head to get along in *our* business. Haven't I seen you

two together dozens of times? And I'm sure I don't know what more is necessary!"

Amos stared. "Do you suppose that others have noticed it?" he asked.

"The major has. Now see here, Amos. Did you ever know me to advise a thing that was not square and aboveboard? No? Well, I'll tell you what to do. You write to-night to that libertine that Edith's engaged to marry and tell him that you're in love with her yourself and that unless he comes back and looks after his interests you won't be responsible. I'd almost rather see Edith in her grave than married to that rake, —I've learned a lot about him since he went away, and what's more, I don't believe that she cares three whoops for him anyway! It's a plain and simple case of fascination;—infatuation,—monomania, and she ought to be treated for it with some sort of sentimental antidote. If there's anything that would tickle me clear through, it would be to see you and Edith get married. Shut up! Confound you, sir, just because you're now my colleague is no damn reason why you should interrupt me when I'm talking——"

"But, good Lord, Doctor,—you see, you're talking rot. Edith doesn't care a—a—that is, she doesn't care for me at all!"

"How do you know? Have you ever asked her?"

"Why—eh—of course not."

"Well, then, suppose you write to Ellsworth and then go and ask her. Oh, Amos, you are an aggravating cuss at times!"

Dr. Couteau arose wearily and rested his knuckles on the table.

"It's getting late, Amos,—and it's always too late

to persuade a man with your convictions that he's acting like a chump where a woman is concerned. Think it well over,—all that I've said; and some day you will see the wisdom of it all,—only for your sake I hope that you'll see it before it is too late. Until the blackguard wrote that beastly book a little while ago he and Edith had not written to one another. It's plain that he's in no hurry to come back, nor is she to have him. A man that I operated the other day who lives out in Los Angeles told me that Ellsworth's maneuvers on the Slope were the scandal and joy of the whole place, and they are pretty good at that sort of a game themselves. Now Edith and her father are going abroad before long, and by that time Ellsworth will probably be shot or lynched or dead of Bright's,—so if I were you, I think that I would get my application right on file!"

He touched the bell.

"Peter, we are going up. Good-night, Amos."

Amos stepped quickly across the room and clasped the strong, nervous hand that had wrung the grasp of Death from so many bleeding, quivering frames.

"Good-night, Dr. Couteau," was all that he said.

It happened about two weeks later that Edith and Dr. Couteau were having a little tête-à-tête on a divan in the corner of the Carters' drawing room. Not far from them sat the major and Amos deep in a strategic battle royal. The low soft light that swung above their heads threw down-standing shadows on the two deep-lined profiles, each of which wore an expression that suggested that of a fine hound working out a tangled trail.

The younger seemed the slower dog and the one possessed of the keener scent. The older would grow

impatient of the cooling trail, and now and then would lift his seamy head and growl impatiently as if he longed to run by gaze. This he would sometimes try to do, and make a quick, impetuous dash only warranted by long experience and intuition. One of these spurts, and his race seemed over.

"Check!" said Amos, moving up his queen's knight.

A deeper growl came from his antagonist, whereat Dr. Couteau chuckled.

"If Amos were a little less honest and a little more diplomatic he would have refrained from such *lèse majesté* to the major's king," he remarked to Edith.

The major chewed savagely at the end of his unlighted Key West; a custom which even the atmosphere of Gramercy Park was unable to discourage. He had consented to abandon his little cud of "plantation twist" for his daughter's sake, but the end of the cigar took on the onus of the deprivation. With a smothered expletive that glowed with Southern heat, he managed to evade the fate which hemmed him in.

Amos slid his king's castle across the board.

"Check," he repeated unsympathetically.

If he had been offered the direst insult the major could not have glared more fiercely,—first at his king, who was helplessly in the toils; then at his antagonist, who was calmly relighting a dead cigar.

"H'mph,—threw that game away like a doggone fool," growled the major under his breath. "Beat myself! I'd have had you if I hadn't taken that queen's pawn with my bishop. Threw it away! Set 'em up again, that was all foolishness!"

Amos placidly gathered up the chessmen, while the major fumed in impotent rage.

The game began anew, and at the start Amos lost his queen's castle.

"That was a fool move," said Dr. Couteau, who was watching with a casual interest. "If it wasn't Amos, I would have said that he did it on purpose."

Edith looked at him curiously.

"Have you such utter confidence in Dr. Knapp as all that,—as to think that he wouldn't 'throw a game' to please my father, because it would be a deception?" she asked.

"My confidence in Amos's honesty is greater than my confidence in my own," replied the surgeon. "I am honest because I want to be—Amos because he *has* to be! It's no particular credit to him,—it's simply the way he's built. He's so confoundedly honest that at times he's aggravating—it makes him appear almost *thick!*"

Edith looked at Amos musingly. Then she turned to the surgeon.

"Do you suppose that he really is so absolutely guileless?—Don't you think that his simplicity of manner may have something to do with the impression of frankness that he gives to everyone that he meets?"

Dr. Couteau looked at her keenly. "I didn't say that he was frank. I don't think that he is. He's pretty reticent as a rule. And I think that if it came to lying in a good cause to save someone that he loved, he would lie with great ease and vigor. But I simply *know* that he would never swing a hundredth part of a degree out of his course to save *himself!*"

Either the aggressiveness in his tone or something conveyed in his words brought a flush to the girl's

cheeks. She started to speak, but the surgeon interrupted her.

"Speaking of Amos, I discovered something to-day which irritated me more than anything that has occurred for a long time." He lowered his voice a trifle. "When Amos was in the hospital, he used to spend all of his spare time—which wasn't a great deal—mucking around the slums digging out all sorts of harrowing facts in connection with the lives of the people that he treated in the wards and dispensary. Well, it seems that during one of these plunges into Avernus, he discovered a little country girl, the daughter of a parson at whose house he boarded when he was working in the Shoal Harbor shipyards. The last summer that he spent there he was foolish enough to introduce some scalawag of a classmate to the pretty daughter. The result was that the girl eventually left home for this classmate without the benefit of the cloth, and wound up on the East Side, where Amos happened to find her by accident, sick and deserted by the scoundrel, to whom it appears she had remained true. Amos had her brought to the hospital, as she had fallen downstairs and twisted her arm out of plumb, and of course, being an old friend, he spoke to her occasionally, with the result that almost at once every old slander-monger and foul-minded busybody in the plant got the idea in circulation that Amos's interest in the girl—who, by the way, was no longer a child, but a very beautiful woman—was not purely philanthropic.

"Anyone but Amos would have seen at once that his position must have appeared a little odd; but no, that part of it never once occurred to him, and if he was to

hear of it to-day he would probably be—— Why, what's the matter, Edie?"

Edith smiled weakly. "Oh, nothing, Doctor,—but things like that—such tragedies are always painful,—but I'm glad that you told me," she added hurriedly, seeing the look of self-reproach that clouded the face of her old friend. "Just because things are unpleasant is no reason why we should try to shirk them. Besides, it is always a joy to feel that one has such friends." Her eyes indicated Amos.

"*Check!*" cried the major exultantly. "You'ah done for now, Docteh. 'Tain't no kind of use to wiggle!"

"That's so," assented Amos. "Reckon I'm outmaneuvered."

"Cohse you are. That fuhst game was jus' a wahming-up cantah." He arose abruptly, pushing the table from him so sharply that some of the chessmen rolled to the floor.

"Play a string of pool, Couteau?"

Dr. Couteau assented, and the two adjourned to the billiard room. When they had gone Edith turned to Amos.

"Tell me," she said in a low voice, "have you heard anything from Douglas lately?"

Amos glanced at her in surprise, for there was a note in her voice such as he had not heard for several weeks. He felt the blood rising to his face, and to hide it he leaned down and began to pick up the chessmen.

"Not from him, Miss Carter, but *of* him,—indirectly."

"Is his health improved?"

"Very much, from all accounts," replied Amos,

straightening up and replacing the chessmen with great care in the box.

Edith looked at him steadily. She noticed that his face, red from leaning over, was slow in regaining its natural color.

"Did you know that we—that he went away from me in anger? I have not had a single letter."

Amos looked at her in the odd, preoccupied way he had when thinking deeply. Principally, he was puzzled at the utter lack of emotion in her voice. It was as if she had remarked that the night was fine.

"He told me that he had done something to hurt you," he answered slowly.

Edith gave him a slightly quizzical smile.

"Are you sure that he put it in that way? That he did not say it was something which I had done to offend him?"

"He said that also," replied Amos.

"Did he say what it was?"

"If he did, it made no impression. I do not believe that you could do anything unfair."

Her face flushed. She was comparing his loyalty with her own. She picked up one of the ivory chessmen and turned it in her fingers.

"Dr. Knapp," she began, "you are one of Douglas's best friends, are you not?" A slight quiver had crept into her even voice.

"I was."

"Please don't be equivocal. Are you not still his friend?"

"No."

She caught her breath quickly, then leaned toward him.

"Are you his enemy?"

"No. I wish him no ill."

Edith raised one hand to her throat and turned her head slightly to one side. Flying through her mind were the words of Dr. Couteau. "Amos is honest because he has to be!" As for Amos, he was wondering whether he had spoken the truth when he said that he was not Ellsworth's enemy.

Presently Edith spoke again, and at the tone of her voice Amos felt his heart smite against the walls of its prison as if it would burst out and lay itself at the feet of this loved woman in her perplexity and distress.

"But you are my friend?" The cry was less a question than an appeal.

"*Your friend?*" he echoed, and the note in his voice thrilled her as never Ellsworth's had done. His eyes met hers, and the cold flame in their gray depths ran through her in riotous waves of fire. She shrank back startled, shocked; it seemed for the instant as if he had wrenched back the gates of his soul and let her look at the naked passion that was beating out its life against the bars.

He noticed her wide-eyed wonder of the Jinn summoned unwittingly from the abyss. In his love for her the healer's instinct triumphed over self. Ellsworth was forgotten; right and wrong were thrown carelessly into the same corner; passion was a pinwheel nailed to the side of a tree, for Edith was in pain.

"Yes," he answered quietly. "I *am* your friend. Command me."

Her lips quivered. The color had all left her face.

"What—what should I do?"

His heavy brows wrinkled in thought. He leaned back in his chair and his great hand resting on the table drummed restlessly with busy fingers. His cold gray eyes rested on the girl as if she had been a child brought to him for treatment.

"I think that I would do this, Miss Carter. Try to dry-dock your feelings for a while. Let Douglas hibernate. Play that he's a ground hog gone down for the winter. You are going abroad before long and there you will have a new atmosphere and new surroundings and every time that you turn around you will not be faced with heart-breaking associations. Time; that is the treatment. Good old Father Time can do more with his hour-glass than ever man with word or hand. He is the only surgeon of us all who can operate successfully upon the heart itself."

He stopped, and she looked up to see that his face was haggard. Impulsively she let her hand drop in his, and he noticed that her finger-tips were like ice.

"Thank you, Dr. Knapp," she said softly. She arose. "Come, let us go into the billiard room and see an exhibition of temper." Her tone grew light as she tried to take him from themselves.

Amos followed her to the billiard room, where Dr. Couteau insisted on giving him his cue, probably because Major Carter was winning fast and men past middle life dislike defeat.

As Amos played, Dr. Couteau talked to the girl, who was sadly distrait. His keen eyes did not fail to note how those of Edith followed every move of Amos. Up and down the room, across the table, when he scored, always the long eyes followed the tall figure with the soft persistence of a river following its bank.

Amos, too, was silent as they walked home together. He was wondering how much he had told her, but did not guess that he had told it all.

. . . . .

It was a blue day for Amos when he went down to the steamer to see them off. A cold, drizzling rain was beating in from the eastward, and as he stood at the end of the long, somber wharf and watched the great steamer dwindling into the mist, he felt that with it went all of the sunshine out of his life.

When at last she dissolved into the gray blending of sea and sky he turned his face shoreward and with a heavy heart returned to shoulder the burdens which he had worked so hard to bear.

CHAPTER XX

ELLSWORTH RETURNS

A LITTLE over two years after the day that the Carters had sailed for Europe, Douglas Ellsworth returned to New York, timing his arrival so as to welcome them on their home-coming.

Douglas had many reasons for his protracted absence,—as had also Edith for hers, as far as that was concerned. In the first place, he discovered that while his health was much improved by the change of climate, the damage to his constitution resulting from the dissipations of his life in New York was far more serious than he had supposed. At first he had simply tried to rest and recuperate; then with returning strength he had occupied his spare time in writing another book of short stories, drawing on the environment for his local color. An invitation to make the trip to the Hawaiian Islands with a congenial party came opportunely to the rescue, just as he was beginning to feel a little bored, and the travel entailed opened the way to fresh literary efforts.

It was not until he had whiled away six altogether delightful months that he conceived the impudent idea of writing the book that had been his real literary *début* and paved the way for the successes that came later.

All of the time of his enforced exile he was ingeni-

Douglas took her hand in a sort of daze, which was not so deep, however, as to let him fail to appreciate his wisdom in not attempting to make his greeting effusively affectionate. If Edith had picked up the vase of flowers standing on the table, and poured the water over his head, he could not have been more suddenly cooled and surprised than he was by her manner of greeting him. But what had listed him over even more than her manner was the change in the girl herself.

When Douglas had seen Edith Carter last she was a girl; not an ingenuous, unsophisticated child by any means, for she had been out two seasons, and had visited a great deal since her schooldays; but she was still in the plastic, malleable stage, as subject to impressions as the film of a camera.

Now it seemed as if all of these impressions were finished, toned, and catalogued. She had acquired that perfect poise and self-possession that marks the woman of the world. If she had been in the least agitated it would have been so much the easier for him, but her manner expressed the purely natural pleasure that one might show at meeting an old and valued friend.

Embarrassment was an emotion which Douglas had discarded with his kilts and marbles, but for a few moments he remembered how he used to feel when his father caught him shaking the pennies out of the slot in the top of the missionary-box, and refused to believe that he was doing so for the pleasure of dropping them in again. He fell back upon the protection of his noncommittal attitude.

"Yes,—I just arrived half an hour ago. You are

looking awfully well, Edith,—but you have changed so,—in every way—looks, speech. When you went away nothing could have made me admit that you could be improved, but—well, I won't admit it even now. You haven't *been* improved, any more than a rose-bud is improved by having the June sun shine upon it. It just naturally grows that way!"

Edith laughed lightly. "Still the same old poetic, ingenious flatterer! And what have you been doing all the time besides growing famous?"

"Oh, a number of things,—missing you, principally!"

She drew down her brows a little, then looked at him squarely, and so steadily that he grew a trifle uneasy.

"Really,—and haven't you found that it interfered with other innocent pastimes,—or have not the other innocent pastimes ever interfered with *it?*"

Douglas flushed, but this time with anger. These bouquets were not selected with the color scheme that he had pictured in his mind.

"I'm afraid that I don't quite understand you, Edith. My brain doesn't work quite as rapidly as it did three years ago, due, no doubt, to the recent practice of limiting its scope to the contemplation of what has grown to be an all-absorbing object,—also to some extent to matters utilitarian."

Edith laughed, this time with genuine amusement, and resting her elbow on the table, dropped her chin in her hand and fixed her long gray eyes curiously on the face of the man. It was a very pretty hand and arm,—rather more rounded than of old; a very lovely, firm little chin, that was entirely in harmony with the

beautiful face above it; and as for the long gray eyes,—they were absolutely demoralizing;—Douglas felt that it would be as much of a dissipation to gaze into them for any length of time as it would to use the opium pipe or the hypodermatic needle! Rather more dangerous, in fact,—for the latter two intoxications deprive a man of his senses for only so long a time as the practice is indulged in, while those long, gray, inscrutable, puzzling eyes, with their changing hues and varying lights and shadows that suggested so much and told so little, contained a potent poison,—or elixir of life,—from which neither the body nor the soul of the gazer could ever hope to rid itself.

The face, too, was so maddening. Here a tiny line that concealed a half-hidden impulse; there a soft shadow where lurked a mad emotion; under the black lashes of the lower lid a faint furrow where passion basked in the light that would sometimes blaze above.

It was more than the beautiful face of a woman. It was the face of a beautiful woman. A live, warm, intensely human woman who was listening for a voice. Despair smote the soul of the man, at the realization that perhaps his voice was not after all pitched in the right key. He felt that he could stand the suspense no longer,—that plunge he must at all costs.

"I am very glad that this concentration has not prevented you from writing most delightful stories and taking your place among our foremost authors," she answered warmly.

"I am glad, too," he answered simply, "not because it has placed my portrait in the top of 'L' cars and on ash-barrels,—nor even because it has brought me a competence of the coin of our republic, but because,

—because, I have thought that it would bring me nearer to you." He rose and walked to the window.

A man is always at a greater advantage on his feet. His attitude suggests action, and action has an abstract masculinity. Then, too, it threw a certain physical weight behind the mental projectile which he was about to launch. Physical strength is altogether too little appreciated. A fine intellect should no more be kept in a frail body than a diamond in a paper box. The body is only the receptacle, of course, but in proportion to the value of the mind, just so should the strength of its receptacle be increased. Again, a strong exterior gives its possessor a preformed advantage. One naturally would have more respect for the invisible contents of a large safe than for those of a card-board box, although the former might be full of atmosphere, and the latter of pearls. But one naturally associates the pearls and the safe, and the card-board box and perhaps penny buns, or cotton stockings.

Douglas was fully conscious of the natural physical advantages with which he was endowed, and he felt that he would never stand more in need of every resource of body and mind than at the present interview. On several occasions, before they had separated two years ago, there had been times when he had felt that Edith was slipping away from him, but then he had rather relished it, as it gave him the excitement of maneuvering to bring her back again, and the danger of losing her had never seemed great enough to deprive the game of its zest. He had almost provoked a quarrel on some occasions just for the pleasure of proving to himself his power over the girl. Of course,

some of this was vanity, but the greater part of it was the excitement furnished by the possibility of losing, small as that chance appeared.

Now, however, the conditions were sadly altered. It is difficult to disarm an adversary who smilingly declines to enter the lists. Douglas should have known better than to attempt to force the issue, but Edith's new fascinations and torturing ambiguity were so demoralizing that he lost his head.

"Edith," he asked abruptly, "are you really glad to see me?—glad as I want you to be?"

She looked at him with an amused but politely dubious smile.

"That's rather difficult for me to say, Douglas,—you used to be so demanding, you know." Her voice was pensively reminiscent.

Douglas did not grow angry and irritable, as he might have done two years before. He felt that the situation was too serious to permit of any such petty self-indulgences. He looked at her sadly.

"You have changed, Edith,—I never would have thought it possible that——"

"It does seem strange," she interrupted musingly, "and really, you are rather more attractive than ever."

Douglas flushed. "You are pleased to be sarcastic, Edith——"

"Which is taking a mean and underhand advantage of you by stealing your own pet weapon," she laughed.

Douglas was too surprised to lose his temper; besides, the artist in him, while not exactly enjoying the situation, was appreciating it.

"Come, Edith,—let's have an understanding. I supposed that you were still my fiancée,—are you?"

Her face grew serious. "Officially,—yes. But I wish to tender my resignation, if it is permitted."

Douglas grew slightly paler and dropped into a chair.

"Why didn't you let me know of this before, Edith? Do you think, too, that it was very kind, or fair, to let me go on loving you and looking forward so anxiously to our meeting; to think that I was going to have you all for my own; to have worked as I have to build up a home and a future, only to have every hope blighted, —not in the flower, but almost when the fruit had ripened?" He dropped his face in his hands.

Edith's face showed a struggle between doubt and remorse. Her whimsical manner left her abruptly.

"Douglas," she said more softly, and in her voice was the echo of the maiden love, the aura of which will never entirely desert a woman's heart, "have you been entirely fair yourself? Have you kept the conditions which I imposed when I went away two years ago? You know we have only been engaged conditionally during the time that has elapsed since we last met?"

Douglas raised his head, and looked full in her face, the very picture of frank and open truthfulness.

"Yes, Edith,—in the main I have. Once in a great while I may have had a petty lapse, but nothing serious. When a man falls from grace he doesn't necessarily fall all of the way. When one is making a hard fight of it one shouldn't feel discouraged for an occassional slip. All contests are in bouts, and more or less uncertain,—otherwise there wouldn't be any fight at all. A man can't win a fight without getting a scratch or two,—if it's any way hard for him, and if

his voice, muffled so that the words were lost, they would have thought that the man was drowning.

The blood rushed into the girl's face.

"I—I—think—I do. He—he doesn't know,—but it is your right to know. I have loved him for a long time, I think,—but I thought that it was only friendship,—and about two years ago I did him a great injury,—then your book came, and I thought that I really loved you, and if you had come right home then and been sweet and kind and true, I could hardly have waited to marry you,—but this other man would not leave me,—though I thought that I hated him then. I didn't see him so often,—but his image was always before my eyes,—and his deep voice was always in my ears, and——"

"Edith! *Stop!* I can't bear it. Who in God's name *is* this man?"

"I can't tell you,—it wouldn't,—he has never told me that he cares for me."

"Does he?"

She blushed furiously. "He did once,—two years ago—Dr.——"

Douglas leaped to his feet.

"Edith,—good God!—it's not that saw-bones!—that——"

"Stop!" She took a quick step toward him, her hand raised, and such an expression as he had never dreamed that her face could wear.

"Say what you please of *me,* Douglas;—think what you please,—you have the right,—in a way,—but you have no right to abuse Amos."

"*Amos!* Heavens and earth!—what in thunder has *Amos* got to do with——"

He stopped short and grew so pale that Edith was frightened.

"Oh,—I see,—how stupid of me! Absurd, wasn't it? I was ass enough to think that you were talking of old Couteau. So it's dear old uncle Amos? Well! well, well. Isn't that funny. Why, that explains a lot of things that used to puzzle me! No wonder he ordered me out to California on pain of immediate dissolution; no wonder that old bear Couteau ordered the major to go to the South of France. It almost explains his going along with you,—he and Amos hunt in couples."

"Will you please be quiet? Now listen to me,—sit down!"

Sullenly he obeyed.

"Your words show me all the more how easy it is to misjudge a person's motives. I had quite a lesson in that myself. Just before we sailed, some things had come to my notice which caused me to put a most unjust interpretation on certain actions of Dr. Knapp. I meanly suspected him to have done an action which would have made him a scoundrel and a hypocrite of the worst type. As it turned out, he was not only not guilty himself, but was acting from the highest and most disinterested motive, and took upon himself the blame of an action that was more than criminal, simply to save a friend. Who that friend was, I do not know. When I found this out, I made up my mind that in the future I would try to be less suspicious,—also that I would always try to keep my faith."

She turned to him imploringly.

"Douglas,—I believe you when you say that you have kept your faith with me,—and I intend to keep

mine with you,—at whatever cost! I have told you that I do not love you any longer;—indeed, now that I look back at it, I can see that I never *did* really love you. You fascinated me; it was an infatuation,—but that, of course, was not your fault, and there is no reason why you should be made to suffer for it. I told you that if you did certain things,—and left others undone,—I would marry you when you came back from the West. I did not agree to love you still,—but all that I promised to do I *will* do. You have kept your word to me,—*I will keep mine to you!*"

She rested one hand on the corner of the mantle, and raised the other to her throat. Douglas rose to his feet,—took the little hand in his and pressed it to his lips.

"Edith,—you are divine! You are a goddess of truth and constancy! Will you forgive me, darling, for the pain I have given you?"

The color rushed back to the paling face. The long gray eyes opened wide.

"Oh, Douglas,—you will give me back my freedom?"

His face darkened. "No, Edith," he answered softly, "not quite that, I love you far too dearly for that. I shall try again, and if I cannot persuade you that you love me still,—then it will be time enough for me to let you go free. But under the circumstances, dear,—as your fiancé,—I think it only right that you should promise me not to see the man who has come between us. Doesn't that seem just to you?—especially, as he has no reason to suppose that he is so favored. Indeed, now that I think of it,

it was not a week ago that I heard a rumor to the effect that he was engaged to some girl."

She looked at him so steadily that it was all that he could do to meet her eye without flinching. The interview was beginning to tell on his nerves.

"Yes, Douglas,—I suppose you are right," she answered wearily. "Please go now. I am so tired!"

"Then I have your promise not to see him, Edie," said Douglas in a voice as soft as a woman's.

"Yes,—yes,—of course——"

"Then good-by for the time being, darling. Never fear, things will work around all right." He stepped toward her, and before she could prevent it clasped her in his arms, and pressed his lips against hers. Although vexed, and dimly conscious that it was not as it should have been, the girl was unable to repress the thrill that rushed along her nerves at the contact. Then as he loosed his hold of her a trifle, she tore herself from his arms and fled swiftly to the stairs.

Douglas looked after her with a cynical smile. "*Au revoir,* dearest," he called softly.

There was no reply from the top of the stairs.

"Well,—I managed to knock her beastly self-sufficiency into a cocked hat, anyway," he soliloquized, as he slammed the heavy door.

CHAPTER XXI

ELLSWORTH'S ULTIMATUM

AFTER Douglas left Edith he walked across to Fifth Avenue, and then turned uptown to the Powhatan Club. Although it was a long two years since he had been in the city, he gave scarcely a thought to the fact of his being back upon the old familiar beat where in bygone days it used to seem as if he must almost wear a groove. His mind was too intent upon the interview through which he had just passed, and which he looked upon with a feeling almost of desperation. He told himself that under the circumstances, considering the unprepared way in which he had been taken, he had done pretty well. That straight from the shoulder lie was the masterpiece; the insinuation of Amos's other attachment was unoriginal, hackneyed, and only a temporary subterfuge at the best, but it had probably made it easier to extract the promise not to see Amos for a while, and that was a great point. Thank God that Amos had no idea of Edith's feeling toward him; if he did get any inkling, it would not be Douglas's fault. And then his brain was fairly overrun with a swarm of petty machinations by which he might throw up a line of trenches between these two.

Most intriguers would have spent some time on the consideration of a condition to which Douglas never

gave a thought. That was the personal equation of the victim,—Amos. It would seem that the danger of juggling with the ruling passions of a nature such as his might have been an element deserving of some consideration. Douglas never considered such a feature of the case. To begin with, when he entered into a game he played to win, and devoted all of his thought and energy to this one object, never wasting the discharge of a single brain cell on the results of losing. Time enough to consider that contingency when it arose,—which was not often the case. Besides that, fear was an emotion which had never yet been able to find standing room in any part of Ellsworth's character. It was due to this entire absence of fear of any kind or description that the man was so consistently unscrupulous. The only apprehension that he ever felt was that of something arising which might interfere with his plans.

Probably the factor which entered the most into the usual success of Douglas's undertakings was his clear foresight in anything that he undertook. He had a wonderfully keen prophetic sense, as to how certain people would act under certain circumstances, and he never allowed himself to be so sanguine as to take an unwarranted chance. He played a fairly safe game, and always to win.

But try as he would he could now see nothing but defeat ahead of him. Dr. Couteau would soon be back, and there was a directness about his movements that put him out of Douglas's class. To contend against Dr. Couteau with the ordinary weapons of social strategy would be like opposing a skillful rapier against a man with a meat-ax. Amos, too, was a

difficult man to count on. He was one of those very few men who are absolutely honest without being trustful and confiding. Edith, Douglas reflected, would be the most amenable to control, and it would be necessary for him to be with her constantly.

Douglas thought of Amos with the calm, quiet, deep-seated hatred that can only be felt by a person of the highest mentality. It was not the paroxysmal, frenzied type, but the well-ordered and disciplined hatred that can be stowed in the inmost locker of the heart for forty years, and brought out at the end of that time as fresh and unfaded as when it was put away. It was entirely reasonless; his mind told him that Amos was really in no way to blame,—and he hated him all the harder for it.

Douglas reached the club in ten minutes' brisk walking, and after a few greetings with one or two acquaintances whom he met in the smoking room, went upstairs to write a few letters. There was a little room at the end of the hall where he had always gone for absolute quiet, and there by force of habit he turned. The door was partly closed. As he threw it open, it struck the back of a chair in which a man was sitting, in front of the writing table. He whirled around in his seat impatiently.

"Why, Amos,—how are you?"

"First rate. You're looking mighty well, Douglas. Just get back?"

Amos stood up, but did not offer his hand. Douglas wondered why, and to avoid embarrassment held out his. Amos took it in a natural enough way, but there was something indefinable in his manner that puzzled the other.

"Amos, I want to congratulate you,—they tell me that you are getting to be the whole thing in surgery in this town. Understand that you've invented a new operation, or found some new and unpleasant kind of a bug, or something of the sort. They're all shouting your name out 'Frisco way!"

"Thanks," said Amos with a little smile, "and permit me to toss back the bouquets with the remark that I hear you spoken of on all sides as *the* coming novelist. You're better known than the President. Look there!"

He pointed to a newspaper lying on the table, and on the back was Douglas's name in large and insistent type.

Douglas laughed. "That's not fame. That's notoriety,—advertising. Your success beats mine all hollow. You cure people."

"And while they're getting well, you keep up their interest in life and give them a good mental tone!" His face grew slightly grim. "Have you just arrived, Douglas?"

"Yes,—this morning. Just been down to see my girl!" Douglas spoke jauntily, and picked up the paper, but the tail of his eye was on Amos's face, and did not fail to catch the change of expression there.

"Yes," said Amos, "I heard that the *Arcadia* was in, and supposed that they must have arrived. How are they?"

"Very well,—I didn't see the major; he was downtown, I believe. I suppose you will be following your messenger to-night?"

Douglas was thinking of the great vase of roses which were standing on the reception-room table in

the Carters' house. That, with the mignonette which Amos was wearing in his buttonhole, was ample for a diagnosis.

Amos flushed. He supposed, of course, that Edith had mentioned his sending the roses. Then his face suddenly became so grave that Douglas was for the moment afraid that he had precipitated things.

"Yes, I had intended to call," he answered shortly. He swung around in his chair, picked up the letter which he had been interrupted in writing, and tore it into little fragments. Douglas watched him in surprise.

"I'm afraid I have interrupted the thread of your communication," he remarked rather stiffly.

"No," answered Amos. "You anticipated it. I was writing to ask you when I could have a private talk with you on a personal matter. A matter which I regret to say will probably terminate our friendship."

Douglas did not allow himself to show how startled he was. He felt that for the second time that day, the lead had been taken from his hands. It was a blow to his self-confidence, and he felt in a vague way that the proposition was growing to such dimensions that his grip was not large enough to hold it. Of course Amos was now going to confess his attachment to Edith in order that he, Douglas, might not accuse him of infidelity to a friend or betrayal of a trust.

"Indeed," he replied nonchalantly; "that is very much to be regretted!—something concerning Edith, I suppose."

"No!—nothing to do with Miss Carter,—directly. It's about *Hope Stanley!* Look out!—there goes the ink all over the place!"

"Oh, *damn* the ink," drawled Douglas, lazily sinking into a reclining chair by the window. At Amos's words he had stepped back, jarring the desk so that the ink was upset. He recovered himself so quickly, however, that Amos hardly associated the accident and the emotion which had caused it.

"Well,—what about Hope,—not that I can for the life of me see how she concerns you in any way."

"No, nor yourself, either, as far as I can make out," replied Amos in a hard voice. "Well,—I'll try and show you. She concerns me for two reasons. First, because I was fool enough to introduce you into the Stanleys' home, and knave enough not to keep track of the girl after you had lied to me and ruined her, and secondly, because after you abandoned her to starve—or worse, I happened to find her and her kid,—your kid,—sick and dying in a miserable East Side rear tenement!"

After the first shock caused by the mention of Hope's name, Douglas had got himself well in hand and prepared for everything. Although Amos was watching him closely, he could not see that his face expressed anything but a bored regret as he learned of the fate of Hope and the child. When Amos had finished, Douglas raised his hand to shield a yawn.

"Quite sure of all of your data, Doctor?" he asked flippantly. "It's rather hard to swear to the origin of all of these spare brats in a big village like this, you know."

"The circumstantial evidence is fairly strong. There are a dozen people who are ready to swear that you have frequently referred to Hope as your wife

and that you have lived together. You will not be able to prove the same of anyone else, I am afraid."

"H'm,—well,—what about it? I suppose you want to have me marry her!"

"Oh, no,—I have no grudge against *her*. What I intend is"—he wheeled in his chair, and brought his big fist down upon the table with a bang—"that you shall *not* marry Miss Carter!"

Douglas rested his elbow on the window sill, dropped his chin in his hand, and looked quizzically at Amos through his half-closed eyes.

"Ah,—the mist clears! I suppose that in your all-wise dispensation of the destinies of men, you have made other plans for the future welfare of that lady."

"Yes,—decidedly."

"Do you think that you can ward the blow of fate to such an extent?"

"I think that I can throw out a line of interference that will block *your* run!"

"Good. Beg pardon,—have you a match? Smoke?"

Douglas deliberately took out his cigarette case, selected one of its contents, and, with a nod of thanks to Amos for the proffered match, proceeded to light up. In the few seconds required for the performance of the act he had rapidly reviewed the strategic features of the situation in his mind, and decided upon a temporizing line of conduct, which, it seemed to him, would not only give him time, but might even result in the ruination of this man whom he now hated with a fervor of which he could never have believed himself capable. He blew out a couple of deep inhalations and then turned to Amos again.

"I had heard that you were a very busy man, Doctor; but really, you know, I had no idea that you had been as busy as all this. You must have spent a *lot* of time in working up this case,—but of course our intimacy, and what I was fool enough to suppose our friendship, have helped you a good deal. What a rattling divorce detective you would make! Really, you know, you ought to get out of sawing bones and take up some legal specialty. Yes,—I'll admit that your position is very commendably strong,—apparently impregnable in fact,—but it has *this* drawback. You don't know the resources of the enemy. Now, do you know, as luck would have it, that flank movement of yours through the sewer under cover of the darkness has been discounted! It so happens that Miss Carter knows all about that Hope episode; has known it for some time in fact; never mind how she found it out,—possibly I got a tinge of remorse and told her,—we all have our little frailties, you know,—and while of course it broke her all up, we have fixed it between us, and no later than this afternoon she gave me her promise to marry me as soon as I so desired it,—which, needless to say, will be before long. Well,—so far so good. But between you and me, Amos, Edith is just now rather keener about getting married than I am. It's a great step for a man that has led as free a life as I have. Of course, it doesn't sound a bit gallant, but it's strictly *entre nous.* You know how girls are! A man does some fool thing that appeals to their romantic tendencies, and they straightway get a crazy infatuation for him. I know perfectly well, of course, that Edith is three times the woman that I am a man, and that she's a thousand millions times too good for

me, but in spite of all that I can't help seeing that she's fonder of me than I deserve, and that my fondness for her is, I regret very much to say, a thing of the past! Of course, I can readily see that for me to marry her under such conditions is dead wrong and all that, but damn it, man,—I've got no choice! I've just got to marry her,—and very soon, or I'm everlastingly disgraced! I tell you, Amos, I'd break my engagement to-morrow, if it wasn't for that one thing!"

"What is that?"

"*Money!* I can't explain it, Amos,—it concerns other people, but I tell you frankly that unless I can raise twenty thousand dollars, or the promise of it, before the first of next month—I'm a ruined community!"

Amos drummed the table with his fingers. Douglas ostentatiously gnawed his nails as if unable to restrain his nervousness. Covertly, he was eying Amos, whose heavy brows were low in thought.

"You can imagine how I feel about it, Amos. No doubt you wonder at my putting myself in your power by telling you all of this,—but I trust you even if you don't trust me, and I must say that I don't altogether blame you. Besides,—you know Edith, and you know what her promise means. She'd marry a humpbacked Hottentot that had just murdered his children and eaten his old grandmother, rather than break a promise. After we're married I'll have to own up, I suppose,—but she'll be so full of her honeymoon then that she'll forgive anything. She appreciates the curse of a temperament like mine."

Amos looked up slowly, his face puckered in thought.

"On the whole then, aside from your obligation, you would rather not marry her?"

Douglas gave an embarrassed squirm that was a marvel of histrionic skill.

"Why,—I don't want to seem a brute, Amos, but,—well, you know what it would be to a man of my disposition to marry a girl that he no longer loved. You must think me a monstrous cad, Amos, and perhaps I am, but you don't know the—well, you've no idea of how I'm squeezed! If I could only raise the price,—I'd just go to Edith and make a clean breast of it,—then if she still wanted to marry me, I'd do the honorable thing!"

Amos still drummed on the table, and Douglas lit a fresh cigarette and inhaled it thirstily. Finally Amos looked up.

"Douglas,—if I give you a certified check for twenty thousand dollars, will you give up all claim to Miss Carter?"

Douglas dropped his face in his hands, ostensibly to hide his emotion—really, for fear that Amos might see the exultation that it was almost impossible for him to conceal. When he looked up, his face was drawn and haggard.

"Yes, Amos," he answered with honest simplicity, "and I'd be your friend for life!"

"Oh, I don't ask as much as that! But you would relinquish her absolutely and whether she wished it or not?"

"I should feel it to be my duty, Amos. Really, I doubt if I could ever make her as happy as she deserves to be!"

"Possibly not! We will consider it an agreement,

then. Let me see,—this is the first of the month. Thirty days from date I promise to meet you here—in this room, and deliver to you a certified check for twenty thousand dollars, in consideration of which you are to renounce all claim to Miss Carter's hand in marriage. Is it a go?"

Douglas rose from his chair abruptly and paced two or three times the length of the room before replying. Then he turned with a sort of desperation,—like an animal at bay.

"Yes, Amos,—here's my hand on it,—and I promise you that I'll pay back every last cent just as soon as my affairs are straightened out a little. And I can't tell you how much I appreciate——"

"Oh, never mind that part of it. It's a bargain, then. Thirty days from to-day,—let me see, that will be the first Monday."

"All right,—but you understand, Amos, that if for any reason you should fail——"

"In that case, we are both free to act according to our best interests, of course. Good-morning!"

CHAPTER XXII

AMOS MANEUVERS

AMOS closed the conversation none too soon. He felt that if he was obliged to listen to Douglas five minutes longer, nothing could prevent him from reaching across the table, gripping the smooth, white, lying throat in his strong, supple surgeon's fingers, each with an intelligence of its own, and throttling the breath that phonated the smug, selfish words.

Douglas had kept his composure without effort, from the interest of the game, just as a poker player cultivates an immobility of countenance which in time becomes habitual. Amos had only kept his feelings in control by the most tremendous effort, and by steadily keeping before his mind the sweet face of the woman whose happiness was at stake.

Amos left the club immediately, but Douglas remained to have a cocktail with one or two friends who had wandered in, and incidentally to do a little buttressing about the foundations of the plot that he was building up. When he had gone upstairs, he had noticed a drab-faced gentleman of fashion who was sitting in the room at the other end of the hall from where he had found Amos. This was a Mr. Latham Kell, a young man of excellent pedigree—since his father had bought and paid for the best in the market

some ten years previously—and undoubtedly excellent financial status. Mr. Kell, junior, was not bright, but he had a retentive mind and an irritable if not powerful imagination which was always ready to supply such facts as he had not at first been able to grasp. He would have been a harmless fool enough if it had not been for his inordinate love of gossip; a perfect mania for producing a sensation on any group which he might happen to join. For this reason he enjoyed a sort of questionable popularity in the club; that is, when he appeared he was welcomed in about the same way as the boy who brings the "general news" slips into a stock-broker's office.

Douglas had observed Mr. Kell, who, when he went upstairs, was trying to push his head through the window pane in his efforts to follow the progress of a certain lady who was walking down the other side of the avenue with a gentleman whose habits were not as spotless as his linen. Douglas knew that Kell could not have overheard the words of their conversation, because the corridor was long and their voices while intense had not been loud,—especially his own, which he had purposely modulated. He knew also that the human blue-jay must have overheard enough to corrode his being with curiosity, and it was with the intention of making use of this useless member of society that Douglas wandered back to the room where Kell was still reviewing the parade of wealth and beauty.

"Hello, Kell, old man,—where did you drop from?" asked Douglas with surprise in his voice.

"Oh, Ah say,—how ahh you, Douglas?—awfully glad to *see* you, old chap! Fahncy I oughtn't to call you bah youah fihst name,—what? You'ah a celebrity,

now, ye know! Awfully jolly tale, that last of youahs, —what? But Ah say, old chap, that fellah that illustrates it is all off. In that colohed frontispiece he's got the hero with tan shoes! Ah chap doesn't weah tan shoes in *town,* ye know!—what?"

Douglas laughed. "I've got 'em on this minute, old man."

"Yas,—but you'ah just back from out West, ye know!"

Douglas laughed and then allowed the conversation to flag. Mr. Kell grew nervous, and on Douglas snapping the lid of his watch, finally rose to the other man's cast.

"I say,—none of my affaih, ye know, but you and Dr. Knapp appeahed to be having it hot and heavy in theah a little while ago."

Douglas raised his eyebrows. "I must say, Kell——" he began, when the other interrupted him.

"Oh, nevah feah,—I didn't heah——"

"Oh, come, old chap,—of course I know that you didn't mean to listen or anything like that. You'd be the last man in the world that anyone could ever accuse of listening to anything of a private nature." He paused and mused for a few moments, while Kell watched him breathlessly.

"If I'd known that you were right here, I'm not sure but that I would have called you in," said Douglas thoughtfully. "You're a keen-witted sort of chap, and you might have been able to give the doctor some good advice." He dropped his voice a trifle. "Of course I would never breathe a word of this to anyone that I hadn't absolute confidence in, but the fact is,"

he dropped his voice still lower, "Dr. Knapp has got himself into a devilish bad fix financially,—woman at the bottom of it as usual,—and, as one of his old friends, was trying to persuade me to help him out. I don't say that he has been actually dishonest, mind you, but it's a condition that the criminal courts call by a very ugly name. He's got to raise *twenty thousand dollars* in thirty days' time,—or—well, I leave the rest of it to your imagination!" He shot a look at the other that was more expressive than any words could have been. "I believe he even mentioned your name, —wondered if it was worth while to try and get you, as a fellow member and for the sake of the credit of the club, to help him out, but I told him that as long as the proposition was a square one there was no one to whom I would sooner turn,—but that if it was the least bit shady,—no go. 'Kell is too high up in the social scale,' I said,"—here the other man threw an awful strain upon the buttons of his waistcoat,—"to mix himself up in a shady proposition and——"

Kell leaped from his chair and gripped Ellsworth by the hand.

"Good for you, old man,—awfully decent of you, Ah'm sure,—what?"

"Yes,—it's a case of *noblesse oblige*. Well, I must scamper. Remember, old chap,—this is all strictly *entre nous!*"

"Well, rawther! I say, Ellsworth,—I want you to come out to my country place next week. Got a house-party on,—no end of a frolic. Will you? It's to be a sort of *au revoir,* ye know. I sail next week. Will you come?"

"Nothing I'd like better, dear boy." Kell was

known to run a liberal establishment. "See you here to-night? Yes? All right."

Douglas left the club, and an hour or so later a little ripple of gossip was washing away at the firm foundation of the reputation that Amos had been so scrupulous in building up.

Slander, to use a technical simile, is like nothing so much as a cancer, the cells of which may be detached from the mass and carried in the circulation to healthy tissues, where they become lodged and form the nucleus of another malignant growth.

Amos, all unconscious, was going about his work, while insidious lies were being carried here and there to start multiple processes of malignment. When he returned to the club later in the evening, it struck him for a moment that most of the nods which he received were rather cool in character, but he was too much filled with his own affairs to note the attitude of others. It seems strange that some one of the many who respected and even admired him, did not tell him of the rumors in circulation and get a prompt denial of them, but the whispers had been vague, and no doubt most of those whom they had reached felt secretly ashamed of having given ear to them at all. Besides this, Amos was one of those men who did not invite confidential discussion of his personal affairs even with a friend.

When he had left the club in the afternoon, he was so angry that it was some time before he realized the peculiar position in which he was placed. Later, however, his action struck him as being so quixotic as almost to make him smile. He believed what Douglas had told him, not because he trusted him, but because he trusted Edith, whom he knew well enough to

be certain that the girl would fulfill any promise which she had made. Furthermore, he was convinced that Edith was desperately in love with Ellsworth, and would marry him at a moment's notice if he urged it. If she was able to forgive his infidelity and subsequent treatment of Hope, how much more, he argued, would she be ready to forgive any mere financial irregularity. In his two years of private practice, and growing social acquaintance, he had learned but too well the fatal fascination which the worst men often exercise over the best women; also he thoroughly understood Ellsworth's dangerous plausibility and personal magnetism.

That he, Amos, should bribe Ellsworth to renounce Edith, without her knowledge, and probably against her wishes, seemed so preposterous as to be almost ridiculous, especially as he had no reason to believe that even if she was obliged to give up Douglas she would ever fall in love with anyone else,—himself, for instance. He had never been able to picture himself as a person with whom a woman of Edith's type could ever be in love. He never considered for a moment his ethical right to interfere with her affairs. He loved her, and he knew for a certainty that Douglas was a liar and a scoundrel, and would in the course of time make Edith's life a hell, and Amos felt that sooner than permit of such a tragedy he would kill Ellsworth with his own hand, come what would. That, he could always do, and he felt his muscles tighten involuntarily at the thought; to raise the sum of twenty thousand dollars was quite another matter, and he set himself to consider ways and means.

Although he had taken over the bulk of Dr. Cou-

teau's practice, and was practically found in everything, he had been unable to hold a quarter of it, owing to his age and recent graduation, and the last two years had hardly brought him a half of that sum. Yet raise it he must, and that in *thirty days.*

That evening he called at the Carters', but was informed by the butler that Miss Carter was indisposed and wished to be excused to all callers. The following morning at breakfast, Amos received a graceful little note acknowledging the flowers and regretting that she would be unable to thank him in person, as she was to leave that day for Charleston on a visit. Amos was not sorry on the whole, as he rather dreaded seeing the girl under the circumstances. He was not enough of an actor to appreciate the artistic beauty of deceit!

Douglas disappeared in a few days, and Amos learned in a roundabout way that he had taken a trip South. Then, with what seemed to him the irony of fate, Amos's work began to crowd him. He was now a visiting surgeon at the Puritan Hospital, and the marriage of one of the attending surgeons of the staff, and the untimely illness of another, threw a mass of responsibility upon him which was almost more than he could carry. At any and all hours, day and night, he found himself on duty in the operating room and in the wards. Operations seem to run in epidemics at times, like contagious diseases, and before long Amos's eyes were red from lack of sleep, and his arms and hands chapped and discolored from being almost constantly immersed in strong solutions. Added to that, his private practice suddenly deluged him.

For two weeks it is doubtful if he averaged three hours of sleep in the twenty-four, and at times he

found it necessary to stop and concentrate all of his will in a tremendous effort to keep his faculties clear and lucid. Soon the terrific nervous and physical strain which he was constantly under began to grow evident in his appearance, and certain sages looked at one another and nodded wisely.

Kell had sailed for Europe, but before he went he had managed to disseminate the material for a vast harvest of scandal in connection with Amos's reputation. The latter only noticed the ripening of this crop in the apparent lull in the quantity of invitations of a social character which his mails brought him, but of this he was on the whole rather glad.

The days began to lengthen into weeks, and as the time for the fulfillment of his obligation to Ellsworth drew nearer, Amos was seized with a sort of desperation. In the current month he had booked more money from his practice than he had in any previous three months, and if he could have seen his way clear to making up the balance of the sum, he would not have hesitated going to a few of his wealthier patients, and, on the plea of financial embarrassment, requested an advance on his fees. In fact he did apply in one or two directions, with the forlorn hope of raising a few thousand dollars with which to try a speculation in some active stock. But in all cases the request was looked upon as rather unprofessional and seeming to imply a lack of confidence in the intention of the patient to ultimately settle his bill; also it appeared to substantiate certain rumors that were in the air, and in one or two instances it resulted in his losing a name from his patient-roll.

Amos had of course thought several times of apply-

ing to Dr. Couteau and once came very near writing him the entire facts of the case. He knew, however, that the surgeon would never for a moment entertain the idea of buying Douglas off, and the chances were that he would consider that Amos was the silly victim of a rather ingenious attempt at extortion. Amos could not bear to simply apply to Dr. Couteau for the money without telling him the purpose for which it was wanted. He felt that he was already under such enormous obligation to his patron, that to ask for more would be impossible.

All this time in which he was cudgeling his brains, he was fighting bout after bout with an even grimmer enemy, in the hospital and in the home. Here the stakes were human lives, and as long as they hung in the balance all extrinsic cares were pushed aside.

When but a week remained before the time of his engagement with Douglas, Amos seized an unfilled hour in the morning, and descended to the hub of the great country's wheel of fortune—Wall Street. Dr. Couteau had always banked with the house of which Mr. White was the senior partner, and, naturally enough, Amos had done likewise. The stock-market was nervous and erratic, and consequently infected its parasites with the same condition. Messenger boys were flying here and there with stock deliveries and white and yellow exchange slips; news couriers were darting in and out of offices like sand-martins; knots of curbstone brokers yelped in shrill crescendo that rose above the clatter of the steam-riveters in the partly built sky-scrapers, and at the street crossings dray-drivers and cabbies exchanged the latest and most popular abuse, while the frightened, swarthy

street venders scuttled their stands from beneath the heavy wheels or broke into fleeing clusters at the approach of a burly policeman, as a school of flying-fish scatter before a shark. Only at the head of the seething street, old Trinity placidly chimed the hour with a calm and deliberate disregard for the sordid scamper beneath.

Fortunately for Amos,—or unfortunately, perhaps, —he just happened to catch Mr. White during one of those moments when the market seems to pause to get its breath for another plunge. It was very seldom that Amos ventured down into the financial maelstrom, and as Mr. White shook hands with him, he regarded him somewhat anxiously. Amos came to the point at once.

"Mr. White, I want to buy as large a block of the security which is most likely to have a sudden rise as my account with you will furnish margin for."

Mr. White groaned despairingly. "There it is,— just as I expected. Why the devil can't speculators come down here and trade when things are running smoothly and we can make some sort of a reasonably certain prognosis? But no,—they have got to wait until things are all stirred up and so muddy that no man living can see the bottom." He turned to Amos almost angrily. "This is no time for *you* to take a flyer, Amos. Wait until we begin to see where we are. Why didn't you come down a month ago? I could have put you in the way of making——"

"Excuse me, Mr. White," Amos interrupted. "The facts of the case are these. It is almost imperative that I should raise twenty thousand dollars in seven days. If I fail, I don't care what happens after-

wards. It is a compact which I have made that I am bound to keep. I have deposited with you about five thousand dollars, which will give me a margin of five per cent. on one thousand shares of stock. I suppose that you would not care to execute an order on a smaller margin?"

"No, Amos," replied the senior partner gloomily,—"we are very conservative, you know,—indeed in most cases we insisted upon ten per cent. margin."

Mr. White was perfectly truthful in saying that the house was conservative, and in addition to that, some of the rumors spread by Mr. Kell had reached his ears. "Amos,—I don't want to seem inquisitive, but couldn't you give me some idea of the,—er,—that is, your reasons for needing this money? Perhaps I could be of assistance in some other way."

"Thank you, Mr. White, I would be only to glad to tell you all about it, but the trouble is that there are others involved whom I have no right to bring into the thing. Just now what I am trying to do is to save a friend of mine from a future that I think would be worse than imprisonment,—or death, for that matter!"

Mr. White reflected to himself that this friend must be very near and dear, to have such an immediate bearing on the future of the man before him.

"What I want to ask you to do, sir," Amos continued, "is to take that five thousand, and use it in any way that seems good to you which will multiply it by four in seven days. I know it will be a long shot, and if the whole lump is gone five minutes after the execution of the order I will promise not to say a word. If I should win by any chance, or if things should be

going my way, don't let go until it strikes my figure, if you lose the whole thing. To be of any use to me, I must have my check by twelve o'clock next Monday. Will you take the order in that way, sir?"

"Mr. White is wanted on the 'phone!"

"All right,—one minute,—yes, Amos, I suppose so, —but it's against my advice,—all right, yes, yes, yes, —Amos, step into the office and tell Mr. Howard, the cashier, what you want us to do, and he will make you out a form to sign." Mr. White hurried into the telephone box, and Amos went back to talk with the cashier.

Presently Mr. White hurried out, ran a few yards of the ticker tape through his fingers, and called to the cashier.

"Buy 1000 R. & F. at the market for the account of Dr. Knapp."

The cashier walked to the telephone connecting the office with the board on a private wire. A few minutes later the purchase came out on the tape of the stock-ticker, "500 R. & F. 65 1-2.

"That's probably yours, Amos,—you see, it's dropped off a bit this morning, but I have certain information in regard to it which leads me to believe that there will be a phenomenal rise in about three days in that stuff. If not," he shrugged his shoulders, "the chances are that the whole thing will go to hell!"

"What's going to send it up?" asked Amos interestedly. The stake which he was playing for was so much bigger than the money it took to play for it, that the chances of losing his five thousand hardly troubled him at all.

"There's a big syndicate trying to corner it, and if they succeed your handful will be worth any old price."

"I see,—well, I must dash along——"

"Aren't you going to stay around and watch it?" asked Mr. White in surprise.

"Can't do it,—got a laparotomy to do in an hour. Thank you very much, sir. Good-day!"

"Well, good-by, Amos,—a telephone to the club will reach you this evening, I suppose?"

"Better make it my office."

Amos hurried out. As he went, a messenger with the abbreviated message, "Bot—1000 R. F. 65 1-2 D. W.," entered the office.

Mr. White called to his cashier: "Stop order on that R. & F. at sixty and a half."

Two days later Amos dashed down to the office of the hospital between operations and, calling up Mr. White's office, learned that his purchase had advanced ten points. That evening at the "closings" it was quoted at 80. The following morning it dropped off ten points and in that neighborhood it hung for the next two days, while Amos watched and operated and jumped three feet when a careless orderly slammed a door behind him. His face lost its weather-beaten look, and was pinched and pallid. His eyes were sunken and dimmed with red. The fourth day after his talk with Mr. White, he noticed as he was shaving in the morning that the crisp hair over both temples was flecked with gray.

On the morning of the day upon which he was to meet Douglas at the club, a stray sheaf of R. & F. which had escaped the fine-toothed comb of the gleaners, leaked out, and the stock went off until it

reached 67 1-2—two points above Amos's purchase. He hurried down to the street.

. . . . .

Mr. Arthur Kell and the friend who had crossed with him reached Liverpool in due time, and after a brief sojourn in London, went over to Paris. The second evening in that naughty but fascinating city, on entering the Jardin de Paris, they almost ran into Dr. Couteau.

If the doctor had met these two particular men in New York, or even in Philadelphia, the chances are that he would either have ignored them utterly, or at best passed them by with a gruff "H'war'ye?" If the truth must be told, however, the surgeon was getting very weary of his voluntary exile, and his thoughts reverted often to his cozy corner in the Powhatan Club. Physically, he had never felt better, having tramped through the Bavarian Tyrol, climbed the Alps, golfed at St. Andrews, and studied and taken the treatment of various baths with names like new varieties of cheese. Eventually he had strayed back to Paris, not through any particular affection for that city, whose inhabitants he abominated, but because it was nearer Liverpool than the place he had been in before. By the same process he would shortly find himself in London, then Liverpool, and next upon a homeward-bound liner.

Consequently, when he ran into Kell and his friend, who was also a member of the Powhatan, he bespoke the young men very fair.

"Hello, boys,—glad to see you,—sit down a minute and have a drink, and tell me about things in God's country!"

They sat down, greatly flattered at the invitation, and soon were deep in the latest Gotham gossip. They had much to tell,—more in fact than there really was, but Dr. Couteau grew more and more afflicted with nostalgia as they proceeded, and would hardly give them time to drink the somewhat frequent glasses brought by the waiter.

Just as they were about to separate, Kell blurted out:

"Oh, Doctah,—I say, ye know that fellah that used to *assist* you,—er,—er,—Webb,—or Woof,—er——"

"Knapp?" interrupted Dr. Couteau, in a razor-like voice.

"Yaas,—that's it,—knew it had something to do with cloth."

"You've handled so much over the counter, you see," interrupted the surgeon smoothly. "Well, what about him?"

"Why,—I fahncy he's not turning *out* very well!"

"*What?*—please explain yourself."

Mr. Kell, delighted at the sensation which he had produced, proceeded to give a detailed account of Amos's impending disgrace, of the truth of many of the details of which he was by this time quite assured. Dr. Couteau, leaning far back in his chair, dug his hands deep into his pockets, dropped his grizzled chin on his chest, and watched the fop from under his heavy-hanging eyebrows.

"He implohed me, with teahs in his *eyes,* to advance him the money, but you don't catch me mixing up in any such business as that," Kell concluded. "If he cahn't raise that fifty thousand by the first—oh, I say, that's to-morrow! Well, if he hasn't that money, he says he'll have to go to *jail!*"

Dr. Couteau turned to Kell's companion.

"Is all that fool's rigamarole really so?" he asked quietly.

The other man colored. He was a pretty decent sort himself,—or would have been if he had only been obliged to work for a living,—and he was heartily ashamed of Kell.

"Probably not,—but it's gone all over New York."

"Thanks,—the *first* he said? Well, I must clear. Good-night, sir,—glad to have met you." He nodded pleasantly to Kell's companion, but did not appear to see Mr. Kell himself.

. . . . .

As Amos entered Mr. White's office, that gentleman was startled at his appearance. His face was colorless except for a scarlet flush on either cheek-bone, and the keen gray eyes were positively uncanny in their brilliancy. No matter what his trouble, Mr. White was naturally too kind-hearted not to feel sorry for him.

"Well, Amos," he remarked cheerfully,—"you're all right,—got almost a million dollars behind you!"

Amos's heart leaped up and stifled him. "What do you mean?" he gasped. "Has R. & F.——"

"R. & F. is about two points better than when you bought it," replied Mr. White dryly. "What do you want to bluff for, Amos? It seems to me that I have deserved rather better treatment than that." The senior partner's voice was reproachful rather than sharp.

Amos sat down and clasped his forehead in both hands. His head had throbbed unceasingly for the

last three days, and just now the pain was almost beyond his control. Presently he looked up.

"I am sorry, Mr. White, but I had no intention of bluffing,—or anything of that sort. No one could appreciate your kindness more than I have, but my work and worry and all has begun to get on my nerves, and I feel sort of light-headed and irresponsible. What do you mean by my being all right?"

Mr. White looked rather puzzled for a moment. Then he reached in his waistcoat pocket and pulled out a slip of yellow paper.

"There you are," he remarked simply.

Amos took the slip, and read:

"Tell Amos Knapp draw on me any amount.

"COUTEAU."

Things began to whirl before Amos's eyes. He struggled out of the chair and staggered to an open window.

"We didn't quite understand that cablegram, and this one came later in answer to our inquiry," said Mr. White, handing him another slip.

"What does it say?" asked Amos huskily.

Mr. White's words came to him from a vast distance.

"Honor Dr. Knapp draft on me any amount."

Amos glanced at the electric timepiece at the end of the office.

"Eleven o'clock! I have an engagement at twelve. Please give me a certified check for twenty thousand!"

In a few moments the boy returned with the check.

Amos took it and walked out of the office like a somnambulist. At the door Mr. White stopped him.

"How about the R. & F., Amos?"

"Sell it."

"But it's going up right along,—you've only got about two points profit on it now," protested Mr. White.

"Never mind,—sell it anyway!"

"But look here, Amos,—holy smoke!—look at the stuff go,—I shouldn't wonder if the big rise had come. It may go to par in the next twenty-four hours!"

"I don't care a damn if it goes to five thousand! I've got all the care that I can swing to now,—good-morning!"

He left the office. That same day R. & F. went to par.

CHAPTER XXIII

TRAPPED

AMOS left the office intending to walk uptown, as he had learned from long experience that one of the quickest methods of first aid to overtaxed nerves was a counter irritation of good muscular fatigue. But after he had walked about a dozen blocks, it seemed to him as if the strength was about to leave his limbs at any moment, and every step was an effort. This was an entirely new physical development, as no matter what might or might not be the endurance of his mind, it had never yet occurred to him that his body could tire. In addition to the actual effort of locomotion, he began to be conscious of a dull, heavy, numbing pain at the back of his head, which the jar of walking seemed to accentuate.

"That's funny," he thought to himself, and his mind wandered in idle speculation on the microscopic pathology of his nerve cells at the present moment, with the surprising result that everything that he had read on the subject returned to him in marvelous detail.

Soon his thoughts centered on the certified check that he carried in his pocket, and he began to figure on the possible returns of such an amount per annum, if invested in different ways which presented themselves to his mind. To his great amazement, and considerably to his gratification, he found that without pen or

pencil he was able to figure the interest of a thousand here and two thousand there,—this in a coasting vessel, figuring in the cost of cargo and running expenses, and carrying all in his head, to be in turn subtracted from the gross receipts and later added to the returns of some other mental venture; that one in real estate; this one in the purchase of certain securities paying so much dividend, and so on, until he had disposed of the whole amount, balanced the receipts, figured the profits, and all without a slip or error.

It amazed him, for although he had always had a logical aptitude for figures, he could not remember having been able to mentally calculate on such a scale before. And while he was wondering at this new and inexplicable gift, he suddenly came to a realization of the oddity of such a line of thought,—purely imaginative as it was, when there were so many more real matters for attention and above all such a central idea.

Soon to his surprise he discovered that he had reversed his steps, and was going downtown again. That struck him as rather more than odd, but he remembered that he had stopped for a moment at the window of a jeweler's shop to set his watch, and as there were several others likewise employed, he had probably started off in the direction of the least resistance. Then his mind wandered back to figures again, or rather to the mental gymnastics with which he had been alleviating the queer disquiet in his brain. He began to recall the last intricate operation at which he had assisted Dr. Couteau, and step by step was able to bring back every subsequent detail. From that his mind flew to his early studies in navigation, and his surprise and gratification were extreme when he dis-

covered that he was still familiar with pages of logarithms to which he had often referred but could never remember to have learned, and was still able to give the number of degrees of every point as he rapidly boxed the compass to himself.

While conscious of the keen edge given his cerebral centers by the nervous strain of the past month, it was not probable that he appreciated the extent of this irritability. He might have walked on indefinitely but that he happened to be confronted by a large clock which told him that it needed but fifteen minutes of the time of his appointment. This brought him to his senses, and hailing a cab that was standing near, he was in a few moments at the door of his club.

He told the cabman to wait, and entered the building with a nervous haste entirely disassociated from any excitement attendant on the coming interview. As a matter of fact, his chief difficulty seemed to be in keeping his mind exclusively on the matter in hand. Every passing influence seemed distracting, and when he reached the second landing he turned naturally to the left to enter the smoking room, instead of to the right, to reach the private writing room at the end of the hall, where Douglas was waiting for him in nervous but gloating expectation.

As he heard Amos's heavy tread in the hall, it struck his fanciful imagination that he was a wild beast in ambush waiting for his prey; a tiger or a leopard crouching by a spring listening to the footfalls of the stag approaching to slake his thirst. Just as the great cats of the tropic jungle must measure in their minds the scope of the one, two, three, four quick and powerful springs required to fasten their fangs in the

jugular of the unsuspecting prey, so had this man pictured in his mind the soft, padded, velvety words that would suck the life-blood from the man he hated. Like his feline prototype crouching in the striped grass he pictured successively the surprise, suspicion, fright, and desperation of his victim. He wondered that he could fail to scent the baleful foretaste from the very atmosphere of the room itself.

Two heavy knocks, and his imaginings crept back into him like the young of a snake.

"Come in," he called cheerfully. His genial air was the soft breeze with which the wings of the vampire fan its victim to sleep.

His drooping eyelids raised a little, and he took a quicker puff from his cigarette, as the side light from the window cut black gashes in Amos's corpse-like face, but he made no comment.

Of course, it occurred to him that if the agony of mind through which Amos had passed during the last thirty days was evidenced by his personal appearance, how much greater his despair would be when he found that it was all for naught,—that is, as far as the original object was concerned.

"Sit down, Doctor," said Douglas, indicating a lounging chair by the window. The artist in the man wished to enjoy with the proper illumination the play of emotions which were shortly to distort the big features.

Amos sank back in the chair, glanced for a moment at the man on the other side of the table, then out of the window. To Douglas it seemed as if he was making an effort to compose his mind for the coming interview. As a matter of fact his eye was following

the movements of a workman who was tacking some strips of tin around the water pipe of one of the houses in the rear, and Amos was abstractedly comparing the rhythm of the hammer blows to the dull throbbing in his head, trying to calculate how much per minute the latter might be in excess of the former. Douglas made no effort to open the interview, partly because the contemplation of the pallid, wasted features of his enemy was food and drink to him, and partly because he felt that, in his present nervous condition, the greater the effort to control himself, the greater would be Amos's incoördination of thought and action. Douglas, like the savage who tortures his victim at the stake, felt that his pleasure in the process would be directly in proportion to the tangible evidences of agony on the part of the sufferer. He not only wanted to hurt him, but he wanted to see him show it. He wanted to see Amos break down and plead and beg and grovel. He wanted him to appeal to their former friendship, and to his, Douglas's, better qualities, Douglas had studied out his own part with finish and precision. He would appear distressed for Amos's suffering; he would appear to consider, and be upon the point of yielding, and finally when he had racked his enemy to the last point of endurance, he would step forth in his true light and revile him with all of the expressions of hate that had for so long scorched the tip of his tongue; show him how he had woven him about with his toils; ridicule him; insult him; tell him of his plans for the near future, when he and Edith should be man and wife.

Of course Douglas had fully considered the danger of such a course, and had taken all due precautions.

Once or twice as he had caressed this latter part of the interview in his mind, his fist had closed instinctively over the hard corrugations of the revolver in the side pocket of his loose sack coat. Personally, he had no fear of Amos, both on account of his equal size and strength, and also because Douglas had nothing of the physical coward about him, anyway. His precautions were not taken because he was afraid of the man he was planning to torment, but simply as a means to compel him to listen to what he had to say.

Douglas's foot striking the leg of his chair brought Amos back to himself with a start.

For a moment he stared at Douglas in a way that was not provided for in his preconceived programme of the interview, and was consequently a little disconcerting; then without a word of introduction, pulled a mass of papers from the inner pocket of his coat, and began to sort them abstractedly. Ellsworth watched him, divining the object of his search, and the blood began to steal up around his cheek-bones. Somehow, the affair wasn't coming off precisely as he had planned.

Without a word Amos sorted, shuffled, and once or twice took out his pencil and made a note or two on the margin of some of the papers. This struck Douglas as being absolutely insulting, as these notes seemed to have no bearing whatever on the matter in hand. Finally he could stand it no longer. He pushed back his chair.

"What are you looking for?" he asked in a voice that trembled a little in spite of himself.

Amos appeared not to have heard the question, but went on busily with his sorting. Douglas bit his lip.

"What are you looking for?" he repeated.

"Can't you guess?" growled the other without looking up. "Your bribe, of course,—the certified check for twenty thousand dollars. What d'ye s'pose I'm looking for,—a crowbar?"

Ellsworth sucked in his breath in a quick little gasp. This would not do at all.

"Wait a moment," he said. "Suppose we talk the thing over a bit; it's just possible that you may not need that check after all!"

"Here it is," said Amos, who did not appear to have heard him. "And here's the statement that you're to sign before you get the check." He reached for the bell.

"What do you want?" asked Douglas sharply.

"A couple of witnesses to the signature,—they don't have to read the statement,—all I want is their fist under yours."

Douglas's face grew livid. "Wait a moment," he almost whispered, fearing to trust his voice. "I want to talk this thing over a bit."

"What's the use?" asked Amos dully. "Fire away," he added, taking out his watch. "Only cut it as short as possible, I've got a dinner on to-night, and I've got to keep office hours and dress."

"I won't take long," said Douglas,—"all that I want to say is this——" He paused, and looked at Amos, who did not appear to be listening, but had resumed his interest in the workman with the tin strips. "I want to say to you," Douglas went on, "that I have reconsidered my joking agreement made a month ago, in regard to forfeiting all claim to Miss Carter's hand and signing a statement to that effect."

"Hey?" said Amos, jerking his head around suddenly. "What 'd you say? I wasn't listening."

Douglas's teeth came together, till a sharp pain shot up over his temple. Through a tremendous effort of will, he managed to control himself sufficiently to repeat the statement—not, however, in a perfectly even voice. When he had finished, Amos gave him another stare, then looked out of the window until Douglas felt that he could spring upon him and tear him with his teeth and nails.

Suddenly Amos's head came around with a jerk that made Douglas jump.

"What's the matter?" he asked contemptuously,—"want more money?"

Douglas's finger-nails sunk deeply into the palms of his hands. All of his deep-laid plans of revenge seemed scattered to the winds. He grew confused, and lost track of just what he had intended to do and say. Something was radically wrong, and he couldn't quite comprehend where the trouble lay. Too evidently, Amos's indifference was no mask. He knew Amos well enough to know that he never did anything for effect; that a man more purely natural had probably never lived, and he began to realize that the line of conduct that he had chosen for his victim contained perhaps more art than truth.

But he was absolutely unable to reconcile Amos's heart-breaking efforts to raise the money—which efforts he had carefully observed—with his present seeming indifference to the result of its having been raised. The man's conduct roused him to a sort of frenzy.

"*No!*" he almost shouted, and fell back upon the

last line of his reserves. "I'll tell you what I want,—I want Edith——"

"Shut up!" said Amos peevishly, "don't yell so,—what do you want to shout her name all over the club for?"

Douglas leaped to his feet, and his voice sank to a hiss. "I'll tell you what I want," he repeated. He dropped both fists on the table, and his head sank between his shoulders like that of some noxious bird of carrion. He glared across at Amos, for the moment so choked by his feelings as to be incapable of speech. Then he began to talk, and as he did so, Amos leaned forward in his seat, watching the tinner opposite, who was precariously sliding down the leader, with the utmost interest. He did not even look around as Douglas began to speak.

"I'll tell you what I want——"

"That's the third time you've said that," remarked Amos contemptuously, without looking around. "Suppose you change your gait!" He leaned even further forward, and gripped the window ledge, for the workman's foot had suddenly slipped. His features relaxed as the man got another and firmer foothold.

Douglas began to choke. "You low-lived, sneaking, cold-blooded liar! You snake-in-the-grass! You stealer of another man's promised wife! Were you such a poor confiding fool as to think that I made that agreement with any idea of keeping it? I'll tell you why I made it. Simply to make a bigger idiot of you than Nature has already done, if that is possible. A month from to-day, Edith shall be my bride; a month from to-day, she shall be clasped in my arms; her lips

that have never known those of another man pressed to mine——"

"Good!—he got down all right," interrupted Amos cheerfully, as he swung in his chair. "What are you talking about? I was so interested watching that chap——" He glanced at his watch. "Good Lord! I've got to skip. Well, are you going to keep your word and sign this paper, or lie out of it as usual?" For the first time a look of real anxiety crossed his big, tired face.

"No!" snarled Douglas. "I'm not going to sign your dirty papers. I'm going to marry Edith this day month." His quick ear had caught the sound of footsteps approaching the room. He thrust his face almost against Amos's. "Do you hear, you swine? I'm going to marry her, and then break her heart!"

"If you do either," said Amos heavily, "I swear to God I'll kill you!"

Douglas heard the steps pause just outside the closed door. He knew that others had heard Amos's threat to kill. His hand slipped quickly to the side-pocket of his coat, and Amos caught the glint of steel.

Thud—crash! His powerful arm shot out like a piston, and Douglas, big as he was, seemed hurled bodily across the room, crushing a table in his fall. The door was thrown violently open, and two of the older members rushed in, pale and trembling.

Douglas lay where he had fallen, stunned, but not unconscious. He had been so close to Amos that the blow was rather a shove than a swift impact. The revolver was not apparent. Dazed as he was, his wit did not desert him. He realized that his moment had passed. He raised himself feebly.

"Gentlemen," he began, "I beg of you to let this scandal go no farther. Dr. Knapp is not quite himself——"

Both men turned to Amos, doubt and consternation in their faces. They had heard his threat to kill.

"He is lying as usual," said Amos contemptuously. "We had a quarrel, and I knocked him down. I will forward my resignation this evening."

He turned abruptly on his heel, and left the room. Two minutes later they heard the slam of his cab door and the rattle of hoofs on the pavement.

CHAPTER XXIV

THE ABYSS

AS Amos stepped out into the street the damp breeze from the river seemed to penetrate to his very bones, and he gave an involuntary shudder as he buttoned his coat tightly up to his chin. Even in the cab the chill seemed to reach him, and by the time that he had reached his house he was in a sort of ague, and shook from head to foot. Realizing that there must be some more potent causative factor at work than mere nervous exhaustion, he drank a stiff glass of brandy and ordered a hot bath. The chill left him, but the lethargy following the bath was so extreme that he gave orders that he should not be disturbed, and, dropping on a divan, fell immediately into a sleep so deep as to be almost a coma.

Two hours later his attendant awakened him according to instructions, but instead of being refreshed by the sleep, it was with the greatest difficulty that he was able to rouse himself from the stupor that seemed to have come over him. His head was still filled with the dull pain that had troubled him all day long, and the strength seemed to have entirely left the muscles of his back.

"Peter," he said to his man, "how do I look?"

"You *look* all right, Doctor,—a lot better than when you came in. Don't you feel well?"

"No,—I feel like the devil. I reckon I'm getting the grippe."

"I'll fix you up something to-night when you go to bed, Doctor," replied the faithful henchman, who, like so many of the employees of scientific men, was firmly convinced that for the world at large the master's knowledge was more than adequate, but that for the care of the master personally he and he alone was competent.

"You'd best not go out again to-night, Dr. Amos," resumed the old servant; "just now your condition is a target for almost any kind of infection!" This was a speech which Peter had many times heard fall from the lips of Dr. Couteau, but now that the doctor was away he regarded it as his own particular legacy, and would have been highly indignant if anyone had ventured to suggest that it was not his own scientific deduction.

"I've got that dinner on to-night, Peter," replied Amos; "just get out my war-paint, will you, I'll be back early, and then you can fill me chock-a-block with your 'yarbs' and sassafras tea, and any old thing that pleases you." He remembered the curious habit that Dr. Couteau had of always putting himself in Peter's hands for the treatment of minor ills, and he also remembered the apparent good results therefrom. Indeed, Peter, who was not cursed with false modesty, had often intimated that if the care of his master had been entirely left to him, his European trip would never have been necessary.

The dinner which Amos was to attend that night was given in honor of a famous German surgeon, who was making a tour of the hospitals of the country

under the direction of his government. Amos was one of the very few of the younger men in the profession in New York who had been honored with a toast, and as the event was one of more than usual importance, he was particularly anxious to do credit to the friends who had secured for him the privilege of speaking. In a general way he had determined about what he was going to say, but he was relying on the time which he had just spent in sleeping to further formulate his remarks. This, however, did not trouble him to any great extent, as he possessed to a marked degree the gift of oratory, but what did trouble him was the lethargy which he seemed absolutely unable to overcome, and which dimmed his clearer perceptions and clogged his usual clearness of view and speech.

While he had never been a total abstainer, Amos had always let strong drink alone, regarding it in about the same way as he did any other cardiac stimulant drug; valuable, and, for that very reason, not to be abused to such an extent as to lose its potent influence when given therapeutically. Just now, however, if a man ever seemed to be in need of it, he did, and probably would at frequent intervals for the rest of the evening, if he did not want to go to sleep before the festivities were fairly under way. After he had dressed, and while waiting for his carriage, the lethargy seemed to return threefold, so he poured out another glass of brandy, with the result that he seemed to feel quite himself again. If he had been a little more of a physician, and less of a surgeon, he might have considered more wisely the cumulative action of these repeated doses, but as it was, the alcohol appeared to fill all of the requirements of his condition,

and he did not stint himself in the final drink of the potent liquor which he took just before going down to get into the carriage.

As he whirled down Fifth Avenue to the place where the banquet was to be given, he could hardly believe that he was the same man who had felt so wretched three hours before, while he was driving up. The feverish lethargy had entirely left him, and he felt better physically than he could remember to have felt for many weeks. The only discomfort that remained to him was the dull heavy ache at the base of his brain, but while fully conscious of this, it caused him no distress.

His head swam for a moment or two as he entered the blaze of light, but the sensation was rather agreeable than otherwise. He noticed with some surprise that three of the men whom he met were not as cordial in their greeting as he might have expected from their former friendliness, but he forgot this in the flattering reception given him by the foreigner, to whom he was apparently well known. The unfortunate events of the afternoon seemed enveloped in a sort of haze—an obscurity, in fact, which surrounded him even yet, but through which the brighter environment of the present seemed to penetrate.

In the hyper-exaltation of his present mood all of the harrowing incidents of the past thirty days were swept aside. Only twice since he had left the club had his mind dwelt on the results of Douglas's refusal to stick to his agreement, and it is probable that even if Amos's brain had been in a condition to appreciate all that this meant to him he would have accepted the situation simply as a losing point in the big game

that he was playing; a point lost through no fault of his own; an adverse decree of fate which would necessitate some deep consideration to offset in the next bout.

Amos was no genius; that is, he was no slave to a sudden, irresistible rush of idea. What he had accomplished was not the result of inspiration, but of quiet, mature, and sometimes protracted thought. Knowing this, he had long since discarded the temptation to measure a situation on the spur of the moment, when its perspective was distorted by its nearness. A pin held an inch before the eye looks larger than a cathedral spire a quarter of a mile away. With the absolute mental control which must always characterize the true philosopher, as modified by one profession, he had acquired the valuable ability of absolute concentration on the topic next required. To the impulsive disposition this faculty seems cold-blooded. As a matter of fact, it is the hot blood which leaps immediately to the surface that is soonest cooled. Apparent cold-bloodedness is often the control of heart, which lies deep, over impulse, which is superficial.

Shortly after Amos's arrival the company were seated, and the dinner progressed with great animation. When Amos sat down his exhilaration of the last hour was beginning to wear off, leaving him a little nauseated and with an odd feeling of confusion, but remembering his successful prescription of the afternoon, he drank glass after glass of wine, until he felt the returning glow. With it came the pain in his head so intense as to be almost intolerable. His neighbors on either side, with whom he happened to be

well acquainted, exchanged behind his back a covert glance of surprise. It was generally understood among his professional friends that he was not given to the use of liquor, and yet here in a quiet and matter-of-fact sort of way he had drunk enough wine to put the average man *hors de combat* for anything but conviviality. Liking him, and knowing that he was to respond to a toast, they awaited the result with interest and much anxiety.

At length, in response to a graceful introduction by the toastmaster, he rose, not in his usual deliberate and somewhat heavy manner, but with a confident alacrity which was unusual. His toast was "The Surgical Progress of the Last Ten Years": a subject giving him free scope, but as it seemed to Amos rather more adapted to a professional convention than a social dinner. He had intended to take up the discussion seriously and from its more important aspects, but, on glancing around at the sedate and somewhat flushed faces on all sides, the mad whim suddenly seized him to turn it into a farce. Amos had a deep-seated fund of Yankee wit and natural humor, which in the last few months had been stifled under a bulk of care. Whether it was the wine he had drunk, the vigorous physiological reaction after the strain of the last thirty days, the streak of madness underlying every rational organization, or a combination of all of these factors, it would be hard to say. The familiar sober faces of two or three prominent surgeons with whom he was well acquainted gave him his cue and recalled to his mind a series of humorous and sometimes rather embarrassing incidents occurring in their years of practice. Of one of them in particular, a man whose

name was as familiar in the surgical text-books of every civilized country of the globe as it was to those about him, he happened to think of a most ludicrous situation in which he had lately figured. Beginning in all seriousness, that he might take his hearers unawares, he made a few brief remarks on the medical genius. "Intellect," he said, "is mental vigor. Genius is a weakness, being the abnormal growth of one or more individual faculties. It is an unbalanced mental condition bordering on insanity, and of which I will shortly give you an example. Intellect is the whole book. Genius the sensational climax. Intellectuality means a co-ordinate mind, and if cultivated to its farthest limits might result in a power of every separate faculty equaling that usually obtained by but one and known as genius."

Close on the heels of this projectile, which impressed those whom it hit at all as being a little solid to serve with coffee, came an unexpected illustration at the expense of the toastmaster, which, after the paralysis of the first shock, convulsed the company with laughter. This was followed by a raking body blow at the visiting surgeon of one of the larger hospitals, to accommodate whose dignity it had recently been necessary to build another wing. An unfortunate who had demonstrated an appendix on the right side and eventually found it on the left, was the next to suffer, and hot on his heels came many others.

It was a slaughter of the innocents. In his triumphal progress down the board he spared neither the honest nor the fair-spoken, and before he had been five minutes on his feet the table was in hilarious uproar, in which perforce the victims joined.

There was not another man at the table within ten years of Amos's age, who could have said the same things without appearing guilty of the grossest impertinence, but for some reason, no one ever thought of associating Amos with any particular age. There are some men who seem middle-aged from boyhood, just as there are others who, although able and competent, will never be anything but boys. No one could ever associate the impudent assurance of youth with Amos's huge stature, big, hard-lined features, deep voice, and weather-beaten visage, for his skin had never quite lost the roughening effect of the salt exposure of his early years.

He could hardly be called a handsome man, but as he stood in an easy attitude, with one hand resting on the back of his chair, his full chest bulging his glistening shirt front, his head thrown back, and a swarthy flush on either high cheek-bone, with his features serious and deep-lined as ever, but his keen gray eyes twinkling with fun as they roved around the board, he was a figure of such absolute strength and masculinity as to make it possible for him to say anything that he chose.

He sat down finally amid shouts of applause,—and sat down none too soon, for as he sank back into his chair, the lights swam before his eyes, and seemed to be weaving strange kaleidoscopic figures; then suddenly the room grew dark; a nauseating faintness gripped him around the heart, and the dull pain in his head, which had mounted to a trip-hammer violence, thumped at his brain until the cold sweat stood out in beads on his face. By a tremendous effort he managed to recover himself, and rose to bow acknowledg-

ment to the somewhat uproarious applause, his face wearing so peculiar an expression of pain and shock that the merriment broke out afresh. Fortunately, the toast-master came to his relief, and the attention of the company was diverted.

As Amos reseated himself, one of his next neighbors, turning to congratulate him upon the success of his speech, noticed the peculiar ashiness of his face, but attributed it to another cause. In a spirit of mischief, not entirely sober, he reached for a decanter of Scotch whisky.

"Here, old man," he said, pouring out a generous libation, "suck up a little stimulant, and you'll feel better!"

Amos reached for the glass mechanically. Indeed, he hardly saw it, but he felt that he was losing his grip of himself, and although he felt that he had already had more than enough to drink, extreme cases require extreme remedies. He drank the Scotch almost at a gulp, and in a few moments felt the blood returning to his brain, and the grateful glow that had enveloped him during the early part of the dinner.

Not long before the conclusion of the banquet a waiter stepped up behind Amos and handed him a note. It read as follows:

"Accident case just brought in on ambulance. Immediate trephining indicated. Condition bad. Can you come up?

"F. R. MANNING,
"House Surgeon, Puritan Hospital."

Amos read the note twice through, and turned a little unsteadily to the waiter.

"Tell the boy to say that I will be up at once."

Slipping quietly out in the confusion attendant on the general leave-taking he found his hansom near the door of the hotel.

"Puritan Hospital,—in a hurry," he called to the driver.

As he whirled along, the objects flitting past on either side seemed to bring back the odd, distressful feeling of confusion that he had experienced in the afternoon, and for the first few moments his mind was in a state of chaos bordering on dementia. With an effort he got control of himself again, as far as the present was concerned, but all the events of the past day seemed to be in a confused jumble, with no outline, structure, or sequence. In a vague sort of way, he recalled his meeting with Douglas at the club, but it seemed weeks ago, and soon faded from his mind.

The ingestion of alcohol, up to a certain point, stimulates mental activity and accelerates the transmission of thought; beyond that point it over-stimulates and over-accelerates to such an extent that the process becomes incoherent. Farther along in the toxic action, the functions are successively depressed, and those of latest development in the individual are the first to be affected. All of the evening Amos had managed to keep in the intermediary stage. His thoughts had been rapid enough,—too rapid, in fact, as one idea was so quickly followed by another that the first had hardly time enough in which to leave its impression. His profound physical depression had no doubt had something to do with arresting the process at this point. At the present stage, however, aside from

every other condition, he was for the first time in his life, *drunk!*

Alcoholic, like tuberculous, poisoning is auto-deceptive. Everyone but the victim is able to appreciate the true state of affairs. The drunkenness of a temperate man is one of the greatest dangers that society is ever obliged to face,—especially the drunkenness of a temperate man of strong and willful character. Amos would not for an instant, even to himself, admit that his present condition was one of intoxication. He ascribed it to the nervous strain through which he had recently passed, the excitement of the past day, and a physical condition of temporarily lowered vitality. The rush of cold air as he drove along re-invigorated him, and for about the twentieth time that day his powerful psychic force coerced the physical, so that by the time he reached the hospital he felt himself well in hand.

Dr. Manning, the house surgeon, and two of the staff were waiting for him in the surgeon's parlor, and Manning gave him a rapid and comprehensive history of the case.

"The patient was crossing Fifth Avenue, and had walked absentmindedly in front of a cab that was coming down at a good rate of speed. The driver, and two or three people who had seen the accident, said that the man appeared to be drunk, for although the horses' hoofs made a loud clatter on the pavement, and the driver had yelled at him, he did not seem to make any effort to get out of the way. The horse's shoulder had struck him a glancing blow, which had thrown him down, his head striking the curb. When the

ambulance reached the spot, he was unconscious, but on the way to the hospital he had come to for a few moments. In the last half-hour he had again lost consciousness, and showed all of the symptoms of an extra-dural hemorrhage with pressure. There was a depressed fracture over the region of the middle meningeal artery, and everyone who had seen him was satisfied as to the accuracy of the diagnosis. Manning added that the patient *was* evidently alcoholic, although to no great extent, as he had walked straight enough when struck by the cab.

"Did you find out who he was?" asked Amos.

"No, sir. He was very well dressed, and appeared to be a gentleman, but although we looked, there was nothing to give any clew to his identity."

"And you're absolutely satisfied about your diagnosis?"

"Yes, sir."

"All right,—send him down to the operating room. Get out what we need to trephine."

Amos walked to the dressing rooms, and as the door closed behind him, the internes looked at one another inquiringly.

"I thought you said that 'Uncle Amos' never drank?" remarked the Senior to the House. "If he hasn't been tanking up to-night, he's been having Spiritus Frumenti packs, 'Q. ½ h.'"

Manning looked troubled.

"If it was anyone else but Amos, I'd say that he was darn well asphyxiated! I don't understand it. Hanged if I think the man's fit to operate!"

"Don't worry about 'Uncle Amos,'" said the Senior. "I'd a long sight rather have him operate on

me if he was full as a pup, than anyone else I know, cold sober!"

"He was at that blow-out to the Dutchman to-night," remarked the Junior. "It's hardly fair to snatch a man from the coffee stage of a stag to an operating room."

"My child," remarked the House severely, "you have once or twice been bold enough to hint that in future years—say fifty—you have aspirations to become a chirurgeon. Let me tell you that a surgeon should always hold himself ready to be called upon at any time, and in any place—from his booze-friends, or his bride's arms—it makes no difference. Sam, pass the green soap."

The Junior blushed. It was suspected that he was engaged to be married,—"a disease of infancy and childhood known as 'incipient affectionitis,'" as Manning described it.

They were "cleaning up" as they talked, and from the operating room adjoining came the hiss and bubble of the instrument sterilizers, and the cold click of the "tools" as the Senior selected those necessary for the operation. Amos was in a wash-room next to that occupied by his assistants, and through which it was necessary for him to pass to reach the amphitheater. While he always took his time in preparing for an operation, to-night the knowledge that he was not quite himself, whatever the cause, made him even more than usually particular, and when he finally came out, his assistants were waiting for him, and the House was shaving and scrubbing the site to be operated.

As Amos stepped out into the blaze of light, magni-

fied by the flash of steel and glass, and intensified still further by the white enameled furniture of the amphitheater, it seemed to him that he was a pivot around which the whole mass was revolving, and for a moment his face turned so white that the startled Senior, who was watching him narrowly, was on the point of supporting him by the shoulder. But in an instant he recovered himself, and, at a nod from Manning, walked to the head of the table. Except for a little square over the site of the operation, the patient's head was swathed in sterile towels, which completely hid his features.

Another short struggle for composure, and the operation began in silence. As Amos laid down the first instrument used, an electric bell overhead rang sharply.

"Damn!" growled the Senior under his breath,—"Manning, there goes the ambulance, and I'm on first call!"

"All right," replied the House. "You've got to go,—Harforth is out. Send a nurse down to take your place,—send Miss Stanley,—she's on night duty in the accident ward."

"All right." The Senior threw off his gown and fled, and a few moments later Hope Stanley entered the room. Amos nodded to her, and went on with his work.

"Turn his head more to the side," he said presently to the girl,—"the light throws a shadow into the wound as he is."

The nurse picked up the heavy inanimate head in her slender arms, and turned it on its side. As she did so, the towel covering the face dropped to the floor. She reached for another to lay in its place, and at

that moment the patient gasped; his heavy eyes half opened, and looked into hers.

Amos, peering into the gaping wound, heard the quick, choking cry almost in his ears; looked up, and saw the girl's face whiter than her gown; saw her staring eyes glued to the patient's pallid features; saw the muscles of her neck tighten as she froze stiff and rigid from the horror of the thing.

Amazed, he glanced down into the blood-streaked face beneath him.

"*Douglas!—My God!!*"

The flashes from the steel instruments on the breast of the patient seemed to coalesce,—and blur. The shuffle of the orderly, as he walked across the room, came from miles away. He seemed to be tottering over the patient, then down came his weight on the hand that was directing the instrument. From afar off came an odd cry from his assistant, and he felt himself shoved violently backwards against the instrument table behind him. For an instant the mist cleared; his eyes opened, and he saw a crimson flood welling over the patient's face.

Then everything grew black again. He seemed to soar in space; there came a muffled crash behind him, and he fell as softly as if on eider down. But from a long way off he heard a voice say:

"Patient's gone!"

CHAPTER XXV

HOPE AND ELLSWORTH

FOR twelve hours Douglas Ellsworth hovered in the colorless atmosphere that lies between the lowest ebb of life and all beyond. Hope and Dr. Manning hardly left his side; Hope, because she loved him; Manning, because he loved Amos, who was under the care of the physicians.

Before Douglas was taken from the operating room, the surgeons had transfused him with saline solution, for the hemorrhage had been profuse. The cause of the pressure had been removed before the accident, and now the critical condition of the patient was due to shock, surgical anæmia, and other sequelæ of an accident of that character.

Over in the other wing of the great hospital, on the medical side, the surgeon who had caused the catastrophe was tossing and muttering, in a condition as serious as that of his patient. Two of the visiting physicians had been summoned by the House, but neither had ventured a diagnosis. The current report about the hospital was that Dr. Knapp had fainted while operating, and in falling had struck his head on the steam sterilizer. The result to the patient was vigilantly suppressed.

When an attempt is made to make a secret of a fact known to several people in a populous community, the

result is like trying to disguise the existence of a fire in a hotel by closing the door of the room where it has started. It so happened that the operating room orderly had a friend who was a barkeeper, and the barkeeper had several intimates who occupied responsible positions on the staff of the New York *Daily Glare.* The result was that in three days' time the story was all over the city, and Dr. Manning and others of the staff, who worshiped Amos, began to hope that he would never return to consciousness.

Restoratives, stimulants, warmth, and watchfulness slowly raised Ellsworth up out of the gulf until his eyes were level with the rim of the world again. The first thing that they fell upon through the murk of the shadow of death was the figure of a beautiful woman sitting in the glow of the late yellow light that filtered through the window curtains.

"Hope!" he whispered.

The figure turned sharply, and clasped both hands over her heart. She rustled to his side as a bird drops beside its mate. On her knees by his bed, she threw one arm lightly across his shoulder. The other found its way to his lips, where it lay in loving protest.

"S'h'h,—try to sleep, darling. Don't talk,—don't wonder. You are with your girl, sweetheart, and she will take care of you."

Douglas sighed, and dropped into a deep and restful sleep.

Ten hours later he awoke, but the room was darkened, and he slept again, and while he slept the strong and faithful but sorely ill-treated tissues of his grand physique, with toil and travail, hurried on the process

of repair, replenished the wasted reservoirs of life, poured nourishment into the thirsty vessels, and adjusted the shattered metabolism.

When he again recovered consciousness, refreshed but confused, his eyes rested upon a sweet face, which hovered over his with maternal solicitude.

"Hope!" he gasped, and her face went pale as she noticed the quick, furtive glance with which the frightened eyes swept the room. "Has he gone,—are we safe?"

"Hush, dear," she whispered tenderly,—"you have been very sick. No one is going to harm you. Drink this for your girlie." She held a cup to his lips, and he drank thirstily. She laid her hand upon his forehead, and found it cool and damp.

He laid his cheek upon her hand, and his great frightened eyes searched her face.

"Is the door locked, Hope? He can't get in, can he?"

A spasm of pain flashed across her face.

"There is no one to fear, Douglas. You are in the Puritan Hospital."

At the mention of the hospital his face became almost convulsed with horror.

"My God, Hope,—that's where he goes every day!" He made an effort to raise himself in bed, but she restrained him.

"Hope,—get me my clothes. We must get out of here as quickly as possible. He may be in at any moment. Listen, Hope!" He dropped his voice to a whisper. "You know, he said that he would kill me, and he means to do it. He will dog me to the ends of the earth! I have had the most terrible dream, dear. I

dreamt that I was in a great vaulted place with white marble pillars on all sides,—and whispers were floating through them,—I couldn't hear the words, but they were about me, and threatening, like the hiss of snakes. I was bound down upon a great altar, and partly smothered, and all about me stood silent, white-robed priests, who glided and shuffled, but without noise. Then the chief priest came and stood at the head of the altar, and looked down at me with his brows hanging low over his eyes, and in his hand he held a glittering knife. At first I didn't recognise him, but as I stared, a veil, which was spread between us, suddenly dropped,—and I saw that his face was the face of Amos Knapp!!" His voice rose almost to a shriek. "He stared down at me for hours and hours in silence, dear, and all about the white-robed priests never stirred hand or foot, but just stood and waited. Then it grew darker, and the moon rose and shone through a high window, and as the first ray struck the high priest,—he—raised—the knife,—and——"

"Hush,—oh, hush, darling! That was a bad dream, but it is all gone now, and soon you will be well and strong——"

"I must tell you, sweet,—to get it out of my mind. The moonlight glinted on the knife,—then down it came, and I felt no pain, but a bloody mist gathered, and I thought that I was dead,—but through the mist I saw your face,—and it was the face of an angel,—and you snatched me from the altar and carried me whirling through the air. Then I was happy,—for I love you, Hope, and I think that you are really the only woman I ever have loved. Don't leave me, darling!"

She laid her cheek against his, and talked to him soothingly, and soon he slept again.

Douglas's wound healed quickly and cleanly, and each day brought growing strength. His mental clearness returned, and he was able to understand fully all that had occurred. He spoke but little, and then concerning the things about him, of which he talked rationally and in his usual manner. Only Hope knew that the reasonless terror which the thought of Amos, or the mention of his name, had at first produced, was in no way diminished. At these times he could not bear to have Hope out of his sight, and when she entered his room and found him with cold beads of perspiration on his forehead, and hands that trembled in spite of him, she knew that it was Amos's great shadow that had fallen athwart his soul.

On the seventh day of his illness, Hope entered with a smiling face.

"You have two visitors who are anxious to see you,—a Miss Carter and her father, Major Carter. They speak as if they were old friends. I never heard you speak of them, dearest, but I know Miss Carter myself. She came with——"

Hope stopped in confusion. She had never told Douglas of how Edith and Amos found her in the tenement. She felt that it would sound like a reproach.

Douglas turned white as the pillow upon which his bandaged head was lying.

"Please—tell—them that I—am—not able to see —that I am—very weak——"

"Why, certainly, darling," she answered soothingly, —"and don't worry, I will come right back."

"Yes,—hurry back, Hope,—I want you near!"

Hope wondered at the queer expression on her beautiful benefactress' face, as she told her that Mr. Ellsworth was too tired to see any visitors. But Miss Carter thanked her courteously, and with a word of kindly inquiry about herself, left the corridor with her father. Hope wondered if it was the major's usual habit to pull his long mustache so vigorously, and to stare at everyone in that searching way, and although she was full of gratitude to Miss Carter, she felt an overwhelming sense of relief as the door of the corridor closed behind her.

Ellsworth had been in the hospital a fortnight, when one day a quick, nervous step sounded in the corridor, the door of his room was pushed ajar, and Dr. Couteau entered.

There had been no warning, no preparatory knock, and the sight which presented itself to the surgeon's eyes was that of Hope sitting beside the bed holding one of Douglas's hands in both of hers, while his free arm was thrown about her shoulder as she leaned over his pillow.

Dr. Couteau paused, astonished. Hope sprang to her feet, her face crimson, and Douglas fell back upon the pillows, his face waxy and his lips blue.

Hope was the first to speak. One glance at the man she loved had roused the spirit of the tigress with a wounded cub. She faced the surgeon with a clear flame in her blue eyes, that had suddenly grown fierce.

"What do you mean——"

"Miss Stanley, kindly leave the room. I wish to see the patient *alone!*—Well?"

The dominant force of the man, coupled to her hospital discipline, for the moment overwhelmed her. She took one step toward the door, glanced back over her shoulder at Douglas, and then with such a cry as one of her ancestresses in ancient Britain might have given, flew back to his side.

"I will stay here!" she panted. "It is my right!"

Dr. Couteau's keen eyes grew uncanny in their penetration.

"*What* right, may I ask?"

"Oh, every right," she answered wildly. "Why do you ask? What is the use of your juggling words? Surely you know that we belong to one another,—that we always have and always will belong to one another. *He* told you that! And we are to be married as soon as he is well again!"

The heavy brows came down and the lids dropped until the eyes were mere scintillating slits.

"How long have you been engaged to this man, my child?" Wonderful what an inflection can command. The flashing blue eyes grew dim.

"For seven years!"

"H'm,—yes,—it *is* almost time that you were married, isn't it? Now run out for a moment, child,—only for a moment. I want to say a few words in private with Mr. Ellsworth."

Reluctantly, Hope left the room. Douglas's face was pallid, and as the door closed behind her he shuddered.

"Well, Ellsworth," said Dr. Couteau briskly, "they tell me that you have had a close shave. However, you're out of danger now, and will be able to go home in a few days. Now I want to ask you a few ques-

tions. Do you know why Dr. Knapp was so anxious to raise a big sum of money last month?"

At the mention of Amos's name, Ellsworth cringed in a way that did not escape the watchful eyes that were upon him.

"He wanted—to—buy me off!"

"From marrying Miss Carter?"

Douglas nodded.

"I see. Is it still your wish to marry Miss Carter?"

Douglas's eyes grew wild. "No," he whispered.

"Thanks,—all I want to know,—but wait a minute. Do you propose to marry Miss Stanley?"

"Yes, sir."

"All right," replied the surgeon briskly. "The sooner the better. Evidently she favors the idea. We'll arrange it for to-morrow. Now, my friend, one parting word. Try to forget the past,—let bygones be bygones,—but these United States are far too small to hold both you and—*Amos Knapp!*"

"*Hope!—Hope!—Hope!*" Ellsworth's voice rose to a scream of terror. The door was thrown open and Hope flew to the side of the bed, turned and faced the surgeon, her white teeth flashing and eyes aflame—a tigress bidding defiance to the foe across the body of her wounded mate.

"Ah—you would torment him? Go!—Do you hear me? *Go!*"

Dr. Couteau went. As the door swung to behind him he whistled softly.

"Well, by gad! In my wildest flights of imagination I'm hanged if I ever expected to get chucked out of a room in my own hospital!"

He glanced back at the forbidden door.

"Operation eminently successful," he mused.

. . . . . .

The following day Hope and Ellsworth were married by the hospital chaplain. Before long he was able to leave the institution, when he and his wife sailed immediately for Europe.

In time Douglas Ellsworth entirely recovered his health, but one deep scar was destined to abide with him; one black shadow never ceased to haunt his soul.

That was the agony of fear inspired by the name of Amos Knapp.

CHAPTER XXVI

EDITH TAKES COMMAND

IT seemed to Amos that he was in the old shipyard at Shoal Harbor. The bright April sun, pouring generously into the sheltered nook, flashed from the gleaming sides of resting boats, brightened the dull reds and greens of copper and verdigris and danced and flickered on points of brass and bright work. The newly scraped spars shone golden-yellow against the sky, and the lights and shadows played in the mildewed bights of partly hoisted sails. Sunbeams quivered on coils of new manilla and shimmered on the golden shavings that marked in clusters here and there, the work of busy arms.

The air was fragrant with the fresh, clean smell of oakum, tar, and raw-planed pine. Odors of pitch and turpentine and all the busy shipyard smells were tempered with the marshy perfume of salty sedge and tide-left kelp. Little waves splashed musically along the beach, sometimes in chorus, sometimes in quick, sharp intervals, for the tide was flooding, and the breeze was off the sea.

From the yard there came an outdoor orchestra of sound; the droning bass of heavy saws, the staccato thump of calking hammers on hollow hulls, and the shrill crescendo of deck-planes. There was a coasting schooner on the ways, and Amos thought that he

was on a staging underneath her bilge trying to pound some oakum into a seam above his head with a twenty-pound maul!

The weight of this awkward implement angered him, but he felt that it was for some reason imperative that he use it; also that great haste was requisite, but either the weight of his maul or a queer numbness in his arms made any hurry frenziedly impossible. Then suddenly he realized why he must hurry. The schooner was slowly slipping astern! He had barely time in which to leap from the staging, but first he must give the loose end hanging from the seam one parting blow. Desperately, for his strength seemed paralyzed, he swung up the great sledge; there was a thud, a crash, and the next moment he was fathoms deep under the vessel's keel!

Then there came a blaze of light, and he awoke with a gasp,—and looked straight into the anxious eyes of Dr. Manning. The nurse was mopping up the water from the pitcher which he had capsized over him as he struggled in his dream.

"Well, Doctor," said the house surgeon quietly, "there is apparently no need of arranging any electrical apparatus that will ring a bell when *you* come out of a trance!"

For a moment the big brain was numb and unreceptive after its long disuse. Then slowly the wheels of the central machinery began to turn over. Like Ellsworth, the effort of trying to realize what had occurred was too great a strain on the rusty physical mechanism. He stared at Dr. Manning,—then at the nurse, tried to speak, and fell asleep in the effort.

At last one morning Amos awoke to full consciousness, but with a weakness that forbade the movement of hand or foot. His nurse tried to persuade him to go to sleep again, but he insisted that Dr. Manning be sent for.

"How do you feel, Doctor?" asked the House.

"Pretty seedy, thanks. How long have I been hauled up here?"

"About a month."

"A month! Holy smoke! What have I been doing all of that time?"

"Talking nonsense and getting cold slush-baths, mostly. Lately you've been sleeping. Do you feel——"

"What's the matter with me, anyway?"

"'Head case' of typhoid,—with a concussion thrown in."

"For Heaven's sake!" whispered Amos weakly, trying in vain to pick up the thread of his memory at the place where it had snapped.

"You've had your allowance of conversation for to-day, Doctor," said Dr. Manning quietly. "Now, try to go to sleep again!"

Amos smiled weakly and sank off into the unconsciousness of exhaustion.

For two weeks after he led a life of restful monotony, the visiting physician, house staff, and nurses utterly refusing to permit him any interest in the outer world. The ravages of the disease having finally run their course, his powerful recuperative faculty began to assert itself and soon they found him hard to hold. In his solitary reflections he had finally gathered up the course of events as far as his arrival at the Altoria

Hotel upon the night of the banquet, but of his speech and of what occurred thereafter, all was blank oblivion. He finally decided that he must have been taken directly from the hotel to the hospital, and the junior interne, to whom he put the question, told him that this was the case.

At length one day he noticed a small scar upon the back of his head.

"Where in blazes did I get that thing?" he asked of Manning, who was in his room at the time.

"When you fainted——"

"At the dinner?"

"Eh—yes."

Amos smiled in a crestfallen way. "I suppose all of that outfit thought that I was full," he observed.

"By the way," said Dr. Manning, "Couteau is back."

"*What?*" cried Amos, "you don't say so! Why, I didn't know that he was coming. When did he get in?"

"Last Thursday.—What?" This to an orderly who had appeared at the doorway. "All right,—see you later, Doctor." Amos listened fumingly to the waning echo of his feet in the corridor.

Late in the afternoon, as Amos was lying quietly, he heard approaching the old familiar step which he had missed so sorely in the last two years. Then the door opened, and Dr. Couteau entered the room.

Before Amos could rise in his bed two swift strides had carried the surgeon to where he lay, and Amos felt the familiar quick sinewy pressure of one hand while the other pushed him gently back upon the pillow.

"There, there,—lie down, my boy, and let me do the talking. You know I used to like that kind of exercise occasionally, and I haven't got over it yet."

He took Amos's P. R. T. chart down from where it hung at the head of the bed, and examined it slowly and carefully. When he had finished he contemplated Amos for a moment in silence. True to their former custom, Amos did not try to interrupt. He knew that if he did he would be promptly and sharply reproved, even though they had not seen one another for about two years, and in spite of the mutual affection which each knew to exist. True, the reproof would be a mere matter of habit; Amos would know that, and Dr. Couteau would know it, and each would know that the other knew it and so forth *ad infinitum.*

Dr. Couteau, of course, broke the silence.

"Amos, I'm going to save you the mental effort of a lot of wondering. Some men refuse to say a word for fear of exciting their patients, and then have them running up a temperature from trying to work the problem out alone, in consequence. Now this has been a queer deal all of the way through, but as far as I can see, you have drawn your share of trumps.

"In the first place, then, I met that little skunk Kell, in Paris, and he gave me a yarn about your being obliged to raise twenty thousand by the first of the month, or get into trouble. I cabled you to draw on me, or rather cabled White to tell you to, and then as I was getting sick of those heathen over there, and was homesick and miserable, I caught the next steamer home. When I got here, I found you hauled up for repairs." He watched Amos narrowly.

"Doctor," said Amos, ignoring the tears which in

his weakened condition had filled his eyes, "if I knew some language that was fit to tell you——"

"Oh, pipe down, Amos. Of course I had to keep your credit good for my own sake, and as far as coming home was concerned,—why, man, I'd been pining for a good excuse for months! Then I was so confoundedly curious! What did you want the money for, Amos?"

Amos hesitated,—then as it occurred to him that Ellsworth had broken his faith, he had no compunction in telling his old friend what he had heard before from the lips of Ellsworth himself.

"It's a long story, sir. Briefly, I did not want Douglas to marry Miss Carter, and I tried to buy him off. His price was twenty thousand, and the time the first of this month."

Dr. Couteau nodded. "Did he take it?"

"No, sir,—the check is still up in the office, in the safe."

"Funny," mused Dr. Couteau. "I wonder why he didn't take it."

"I don't believe he ever intended to," said Amos. "I think that the chances are, he just wanted to gain time."

"Well,—it hasn't done him any good. He lied to you, Amos, and you were a benighted ass not to see through him. Edith has entirely lost every particle of the foolish schoolgirl sentiment that she ever felt for the scoundrel. Now, listen and learn the truth. Edith Carter does not love Douglas Ellsworth; hasn't loved him for years, and she told him so and asked to be released from her engagement when she first returned from Europe. Hold on now—just shut up

and listen to me." He held up his hand warningly. "Ellsworth lied to you, as usual, and like a chump you took it all in. Moreover, Douglas Ellsworth is married! Married to Hope Stanley, and cleared out, where, I neither know nor care."

Amos leaped bolt upright in bed, his eyes starting, his hands gripping the coverlet until the veins stood out upon his bony, wasted forearms.

"Married!" he gasped. "Great God! How?"

"By a minister, I suppose," replied Dr. Couteau snappishly, while his keen eyes narrowly watched Amos's face. "Where did you see him last?"

"That afternoon at the club. Douglas married to Hope! Well, upon my soul!—and Edith? How did she take it, Doctor?"

"With psalms of joy and thanksgiving. I tell you, you chump, she got over her foolish infatuation for him years ago, just as I always knew that she would."

Amos's face darkened. "Does Edith know of his affair with Hope?" he began.

"No,—and there's no particular reason why she should."

Amos sank back on the pillows, his face suddenly pale.

"Then—Edith is—free!"

Dr. Couteau glanced at him sharply.

"No, you addle-head," he replied with a rasp in his voice, "she is not free because she is in love with a big, long-legged, thick-headed gilly named *Amos Knapp!* Told me so herself. Told Ellsworth so when she first came back. Told the major so. Appears to have told about everybody, in fact, but you. Good Lord Almighty! When I was your age I didn't

need some driveling old fool who had outlived his usefulness to come around and straighten out my love affairs and tell me when some girl wanted to cotton up to me."

He walked fuming twice across the room, turned suddenly, and regarded the speechless Amos with what seemed to be a snarl of rage.

"Well, I've got to go now and hold down your practice until you find your feet again. Shouldn't wonder if you had a lady caller some time to-morrow, but if you tell her what I've told you, I swear by gad, sick as you are, I'll give you a concussion that will put you out of the hunt for good!"

Before Amos could answer his quick footsteps were filling the corridor with echoes

. . . . .

It was late in the following morning when she came. Being in ignorance of Amos's knowledge of her sentiment toward him gave Edith the advantage from the start. She felt no trace of embarrassment. Her most conscious feeling toward Amos was one of heart-breaking pity for his happy ignorance of the events connected with Ellsworth's operation, and of what the world was saying of him in consequence. Manning had told Dr. Couteau, who in turn had told Edith, all of the incidents of the case, of which she knew that Amos himself had not the slightest inkling.

On entering his room Edith was so shocked at Amos's changed appearance that with all of her poise she stood for a moment speechless. The hair which she remembered as being glossy black was flecked with gray. The big features had lost their rounded outline and the deep lines were even deeper. Only the

calm gray eyes shone with their clear steadiness and the firm chin and square, cleanly cut jaw were unchanged. He was sitting up in bed and beneath his light gown the massive bony structures of his huge, wasted frame protruded in a way that struck a swift pain to the girl's heart.

The steady contemplation of a loneliness which must be bravely born gives to the features an expression of pathos as deep as the desolation itself. Amos's face had begun to wear this look, and his sickness served to accentuate it. This expression had never ceased to haunt the girl since the gloomy afternoon, two years before, when Amos had stood for an hour in the rain at the end of the pier, and watched the great steamer swing ponderously into the stream. She caught the same look when she first entered, for Amos had expected her in the afternoon and thought that the nurse was returning.

Then in a flash the expression vanished as a fever-mist in a river-bed is whipped away by the first rays of the sun, and there came a light in the steely eyes that seemed to drive the shadows from the deep lines of his face.

"Edith!" It was the first time that he had ever called her by her Christian name.

The girl stepped quickly to the side of the bed and dropped her hand into the hungry grasp that was awaiting it. As she did so Amos's face grew suddenly pale, but fortunately, while joy will often powerfully disturb the cardiac function, its reaction is of a stimulating character. The blood came back in a warm wave, but for the moment he was speechless.

"Amos!" she cried in a low voice, that thrilled him

to the soul, for try as she would she could not keep it free of tears. "It is so good to see you again and to learn that you are getting strong and well."

For the moment he could not trust himself to speak. Indeed, there was little need, for if ever a man's whole breathing consciousness told its mute love story as it welled from the inmost springs of his life, so did Amos's, as holding her hand in his he leaned back against his white pillows and let the song of his soul quiver out in chords and harmonies through his fever-stricken frame.

Still holding his hand she dropped in the chair beside his bed, and they looked at one another in the long gaze that mocks at words and is the ecstasy of the life which laughs at death. All of the lonely, heart-breaking past since the time of their separation they told to one another in that look; all at least that either had the need or wish to know.

Then slowly the rich blood crept up into the girl's face until its glow warned Amos that even silence can run riot and that speech is given, not only to express a thought, but to control it.

"Edith," he said with a convulsive laugh that was half a sob, "I have been starving for you, dear, and I am in danger of drinking too full now that you are here."

"I have wanted you, Amos," she murmured. "Oh, so much—and I never knew it until we said good-by so long ago."

He reached out both great arms, and, with a strength which his days of illness had been powerless to crush, drew her to him until her face rested against his.

"I have always known how I wanted you, my own

darling," he whispered, "but it needed weakness to give me the strength to tell you so. Do you love me, sweet?"

A pair of warm lips pressed close to his gave him the answer which his heart panted to hear.

"I think that I have always loved you, Amos; I know that I have always needed you;" she loosed herself gently and, still holding his hand, sank back in the chair at his side.

"You will marry me soon, Edith?" he asked, his breath coming quickly at the words.

"I will marry you to-day, if you wish it, dear," she answered simply. "There must be no more separations,—even little ones."

Amos laughed with the light-hearted joyousness of a boy.

"You darling!" he cried, so blithely that the nurse, who was about to enter, caught the words, and, turning, stole quietly away. "Don't dare to tempt me that way! No, Edith," he went on, more seriously, "you shall not marry any such convalescent crip as I am. God grant that you shall only be married once in your life and that wedding must be a grand affair. I don't believe in these quiet, timid splicings. A girl as precious as you are is entitled to a grand old send-off, with much noise and splendor and flags and music and all the rest of it. Why, I'd like to parade down Fifth Avenue with a brass band!"

Edith smiled, then turned her head aside to hide the tears that were gathering in her long gray eyes.

"We might have that afterwards at a reception, Amos. You see, if we were married soon,—here perhaps, I could help nurse you into health again."

"You're doing that every minute, sweet. I can fairly feel myself grow and expand. Let's see, a pound a day for the next thirty days and another thirty to get it clamped down and planed off! That ought to make me fit again, Edith!"

Already his voice seemed to have recovered much of its old ring and his face its natural ruddiness.

"You see, dear," he went on, "I have not been idle the last few years. I have got a ripping practice and it's growing every day. I'm visiting surgeon here, you know, and there's not a man living who can point to a single loose stone in the foundation of my professional standing. Why,—Edith,—what's the matter?"

Edith's self-control had given way before the pity of the thing. She thought of the column on column of black insinuation that had filled the daily newspapers, the whispers that had crept with the sibilant hiss of a serpent through the drawing rooms where Amos had been heretofore an eagerly sought guest, of the plain, unvarnished facts which had been set forth in the clubs,—and he, the man whom she loved, with the proud boastfulness of a lover setting forth in his joyous ignorance the strength of his position! Her heart grew cold as she thought of the future, now so near at hand, when he must be told all.

"I—was—thinking of how—you had,—how lonely you have been, Amos."

A wave of tenderness swept across his face.

"And you, Edith,—you have suffered too, my darling!" He paused, and from the slow hardening of his features and the quick, cold gleam that lit for a moment his steady eyes, she knew that he was thinking of that other, once his friend, whose shadow had for so

long darkened the light of their love. Her whole warm woman's nature rebelled hotly at this echo of an unhappy past which, whatever its demands in the future, had no claim at least upon the joyous present. This was her day, and his; the awakening must soon come to him, when he would need all of the power of their mutual love to face the sickening facts of which he was now in ignorance. Knowing him as she did she shuddered to think of what his course might be, but in this hour she willed that their lives should be welded beyond the possibility of separation in that dark day of reckoning so close at hand. Now she would deceive him for his future's good.

She laughed the low, caressing little laugh of the woman whose happiness can know no alloy.

"Shame on you, sir!" she cried gayly, "to dare turn your eyes backward while I am sitting here in front of you." She grew coquettish with that subtle allurement which is half blushes, half audacity. "Perhaps you think that no future can wipe out the suffering of the past. Do you dare to imply," half turning her rosy face from him, while her long lashes modestly veiled the brimming eyes, "that your future—with me—as your—wife——"

The swift flame flashed to the man at her side, swept through his whole being in a great devouring blaze, rushed in a seething conflagration through heart and mind and soul, fusing the fibers of reason and recollection, catching him up in its blast and bearing him like a feather upon its brim. He gathered her to him in a quick, mad, all-compelling fury of love, while her eager arms flew around his neck, and her sweet face was crushed like a flower to his.

"Edith!" he gasped, "my love! my darling! my own glorious girl!—I love you! I love you! I love you!—I worship you! I adore you! You shall never leave me again!"

Sobbing and gasping, her face rosy with love and wet with the tears that streamed from her eyes, she clung to him, returning message for message and word for word the outpourings of his all-consuming passion.

"My boy!" she sobbed. "My own brave, precious mate! My husband and my life! In happiness and sorrow and in pain and joy you shall never let me go again. Promise me, my own."

"In life and death, my love, I promise!" he murmured passionately.

CHAPTER XXVII

THE STRONG HEART

THREE days later, Dr. Couteau told Amos all of the events associated with his operation the night of the banquet at the Altoria Hotel. At first Amos had been unable to believe him, but little by little his mind began to pick up landmarks here and there. When the whole truth had finally permeated his brain, his despair might have been dangerous had it not been for Dr. Couteau.

"Why did you not tell me all of this before?" demanded Amos fiercely. "Don't you see that I can never marry Edith——"

"No," interrupted Dr. Couteau, in a tone as fierce as Amos's own. "Damn you, sir, do you think that you have that girl's happiness any more at heart than I have, who loved her mother before her, and have watched over her as I would my own daughter if it had pleased God to give me one."

"And you say the press accuses me of the deliberate attempt to murder Ellsworth?" demanded Amos incredulously.

"No, Amos. There are a couple of scurrilous sheets which throw out dirty insinuations which nobody of course regards. The direct charges are that when you performed the operation you were so drunk that you fell on top of the patient and then

rolled off onto the floor, striking your head in the fall. There seems to be no denying these charges, Amos, especially as there were men at the dinner who are willing to swear that they saw you drink enough to down three ordinary men. To those of us who know the facts of the case the explanation is of course simple. Edith understands it and swears that she will marry you in spite of the major, the profession, the public, and the W. C. T. U."

"Did Edith know all about this when she came in to see me the first time?" Amos asked.

"Of course she did. How could she help it? It's been in all of the papers. Now, look here, Amos, I'll not deny that you are at present a stench in the nostrils of every old scandal-monger in this town and that as soon as the news of her engagement gets about Edith will be receiving letters from every friend, relative, and acquaintance that she's got, together with a lot of officious asses that no one ever heard of, imploring her to go down to Sing Sing, and pick out any criminal or wife-beater in preference to you, but she loves you, man, and means to marry you in spite of yourself."

"But, my God, Doctor, I can't marry her *now!*"

"Now is just the time that you *should* marry her. You don't care for the public, and the major is a damned old fool. He tells her that she shall never marry you with his consent, and secretly hopes that she will marry you anyway, so that he can have an 'I told you so' in reservation. Amos, the marriage-tie is a rotten silk ligature compared to the bond which welds a man and woman soul to soul when they clasp hands in the troubled waters which you find yourself in to-day. Whether you *want* to marry her or not is of

course your own affair, but I tell you right now that unless you do marry her pretty soon someone else will; some chap who's got more sense and less sentiment."

"And less to live down," said Amos quietly.

A quick look of misgiving flashed for an instant from the keen eyes of the older man; such an expression as might find its way into the face of a master-swordsman who for the first time finds his most skillful thrusts parried without apparent effort by his adversary.

"Very true, Amos," he replied. "There's no denying that you've got a long, hard journey ahead of you. If you prefer to travel it alone, why, that's your own affair. It's rather tough on Edith, I'll admit, but if your profession is your first consideration——"

"Doctor," interrupted Amos impatiently, "I don't understand you when you talk like that. It is not your usual method; besides, it's illogical, knowing as you do what I've gone through already, and why."

"Possibly I fail to catch your meaning, Amos," replied the older man sharply. "What do you want to do anyway—give her up?"

"Never!—But before I marry her I want to clear my name of every cloud of suspicion."

Dr. Couteau turned and looked at him long and steadily.

"You do, eh?" he answered finally. "Well—how do you propose to go about it?"

"By forcing Ellsworth to deny every one of these dirty lies himself, and by publishing the written statement of everyone concerned in the whole miserable affair."

Dr. Couteau gave a short, bitter laugh.

"Capital!—in theory. Either you have not yet mastered the situation or else you are in utter ignorance of your profession and the great American public. Now let me tell you something. Ellsworth himself is out of the running. He is a broken man. His nerve is gone for good, and practically the only thing which has been left him out of the wreck is a blind, reasonless, overwhelming terror of a man named Amos Knapp. I think that the mere sight of you would almost drive him into insanity. His testimony is worthless. When a man in our profession, Amos, receives such a blow as you have, the wound may heal in time, but he will carry the scar to his grave."

He took a short turn across the room and back to the window again.

"Don't misunderstand me, Amos. You will not lose your practice; possibly quite the reverse, even although, as is very probable, the evangelical board of directors of this institution may request your resignation. You are a surgeon, born and bred; you have the spirit of the craft and you will be called upon to fulfill your function, but when your body has crumbled into dust and your name becomes a misty memory in the minds of men, there will still be those who on hearing it spoken, or seeing it in the archives of our glorious profession, will say, 'Amos Knapp; ah, yes, he is the man who——' and the whole dark story will be dragged from the shadows of the dead past and given speech again. Amos, ours is the only profession in which an accident such as yours appears to be can never be forgotten; in which the dead will never be allowed to bury its dead in peace."

The keen voice, which had dropped to a sub-normal note, stopped suddenly. Amos's great head fell back, his face white as the pillow that supported it. Dr. Couteau had reached his side in two quick steps, and for an instant the expression in his deep, masterful eyes was identical with that which they wore as they quickly scanned the patient on the table to gauge his strength. Perhaps just for an instant he may have thought that he had cut too deep, albeit no deeper than the root of the disease. But the operation was on, the wound laid open, the light let in, and now the quivering parts might heal from the bottom, as heal they must to make the tissue sound.

Then slowly the strong heart of the patient arose to meet the shock. Drop by drop the red vehicle of life crept back into the pallid cheeks. Beat by beat the strong heart sent its re-enforcement to every quivering cell and fiber. The light crept back into the clear gray eyes, borne on the fighting flame of his Anglo-Saxon heritage. The deep voice rumbled up from the massive chest.

"Then hour by hour, day by day, and month by month, I will fight it out for such time as God shall give me life!"

"Amos!—my boy!—my own dear boy!"

Dr. Couteau had thrown himself on his knees by the bed and flung his arms about the patient's neck. Dr. Couteau, the strong man, the compelling scientist, the indomitable warrior of countless struggles with the arch-enemy of the human race, soothed and comforted his patient with the soft murmurings of a mother, while the tears coursed down his deep-seamed face.

"There, there, Amos!" He arose suddenly to his

feet. "You make a baby of me—a blubbering infant, by gad! Now that's done we'll talk of the cure. You will live it down, Amos; we will live it down together, my boy; and you will win back all of your outworks and trenches one by one by strong, steady, manly effort in the field to which God has called you. It will be a steady advance, Amos, not a blind, impetuous charge. It comes to all of us, Amos; yours is your profession, mine was a woman; and I tell you that yours is the smoother path. You have fought a good fight and you have won the day. Now because your regiment is cut to pieces don't abandon your position. She loves you, Amos, and unless you marry her, and that right soon, the whole battle has been fought in vain."

Amos turned, reached out his hand, and clasped the one that came to meet it.

"We shall fight it—fight it out, Doctor. Edith will help me!"

THE END

THE HOUSE IN THE WOODS

By Arthur Henry

Author of "An Island Cabin"

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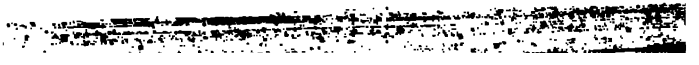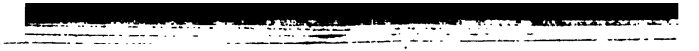
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